Nhl. 654

# THE PRODIGAL

Return'd HOME;

OR, THE

# MOTIVES

OF THE

# CONVERSION

TO THE

# Catholick Faith

OF

*E. L.* Master of ARTS

In the University of *Cambridge.*

*Et tu conversus, confirma fratres tuos,* Luc. 22. 32.

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Printed *Anno Domini* 1684.

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# THE PREFACE TO THE Proteſtant Reader.

*WHenſoever it pleaſes the Almighty Goodneſs to enlighten with the glorious beams of Divine Truth thoſe who ſit in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death in ſo powerful a manner, as that forſaking the perplexed Labyrinth of Errors, they betake themſelves for repoſe and ſafety into the boſome of the* Catholick Church; *'tis Satan's policy by his Agents to make the World believe that the motives of their Converſion were but weak and carnal, leaſt others ſhould follow their example.*

*Herein I have been as deeply cenſur'd as others, to whom God has vouchſafed the like extraordinary mercy: Yet truly, whatever calumnies have hereupon been caſt upon me by ſome who have imbitter'd Spirits, and Hearts ſwoln with rancour againſt the* Catholick Church, *as much as concerns my ſelf, I ſhould for many reaſons have contentedly ſat down in ſilence, rejoycing in the teſtimony of a good Conſcience, if the good of thoſe, upon whom my converſion may have moſt influence, had not in charity oblig'd me to refuſe no pains that might afford them help or ſatisfaction in a buſineſs of the higheſt nature and concernment.*

*This was the preſſing conſideration, which at laſt prevailed with*

*with me to give theſe Motives of my Converſion a publick beeing, and common air to breath in; that their own eyes might be Judges, what juſt cauſe I had to change my Religion, and how much reaſon there is for them to follow me.*

*Of which I conceive great hopes, when to me it ſeems impoſſible for any prudential man, who ſeriouſly enters into the conſideration of the grounds of Chriſtian belief, with a Soul wholly diveſted of all prejudices and ſelf-intereſts whatſoever, earneſtly imploring the Divine aſſiſtance and direction; I ſay, it ſeems to me impoſſible for any prudential man in theſe circumſtances, not at laſt to diſcover the truth of the* Catholick *Religion, and acknowledge the Church of* Rome *to be the only high-*

*road to Heaven and Happineſs, he will hear a Divine voice whiſpering to him,* This is the old path, walk in it, and thou ſhalt find reſt unto thy Soul.

*Jerim. 16. 16.*

*Thus by Gods bleſſing I ſought, and this reſt at laſt I found; and never found it, 'till after much pains and ſtudy, after many Prayers and Tears, after many Faſtings and Watchings, after many toſſings and turnings, after many ſad delays and expoſtulations, after many conflicts and agonies in Spirit, my reſolutions by the powerful workings of Grace on my Soul breaking through all difficulties, did effectually bring me into the arms of the* Roman Church.

*In which I ſaw no reaſon to ſuſpect any deluſion, when my moſt ſerious reflections paſs'd judgment*

on

*on it; seeing this happy change was not wrought in me by any humane persuasion, but the God of Truth, did by his immediate inspirations begin this work of mercy on my Soul, when, having no thoughts at all of becoming a* Roman Catholick, *and finding much bitterness in the ways of sin and worldly vanities, I was earnestly seeking of God, what course I might best take how to please him, and save my precious and immortal Soul.*

*But to prevent all fear of Enthusiasm, pretended illuminations aud false lights, (wherewith many poor Souls in our Nation are so miserably misled) God who is as well essential Reason as Goodness, did not only move my Will, but also rationally convince my Under-*

*ſtanding, that all Communions profeſſing Chriſt beſide the* Roman, *were more or leſs erroneous, and ſhe only the true* Catholick Church, *according to the conſtant notion of Antiquity, out of which ordinarily* Salvation *was not to be expected. And therefore I muſt flie to her, as to the ſaving Ark, that I might not periſh in the deluge of my ſins.*

*So then this change in me was not a paſſionate diſtortion of an intereſſed will, puſhing forward the blind underſtanding to fix ſuddenly, and adhere pertinaciouſly to more then the light of reaſon did clear up to the eye of the Soul, but undoubtedly* mutatio dexteræ Excelſi, *the work of God wrought in my heart by convincing arguments, as the following Motives*

*tives do ſufficiently evidence.*

*Nor could it be to ſatisfy the inclinations of ſenſual nature, when I was to forſake my Relations, my Friends, my Temporal Revenues and Preferments, and all worldly contentments; to take up my Croſs and follow Jeſus by contempt of the world, in the perpetual practice of ſelf-denyal and mortification. And happy is he, who had rather have a Croſs with Chriſt, than a Crown without him.*

*Thus the Father of Mercies was graciouſly pleas'd by an efficacious call to bring his Prodigal Son Home; For his Church is his Houſe, where he dwells among his Saints on earth with his ſpecial preſence, to govern and provide for them all things conducing to their happineſs. From*

*which houſhold of Faith I was an Alien, while I was a Member of the* Proteſtant Church, *which ſtands dis-joynted from* Catholick *Unity by a* Schiſm *too notorious to be juſtified. And until we (like true Penitents) return unto our Mother Church which made us Chriſtians, we like Prodigals feeding on ratling Husks of formal Devotion, without any ſubſtantial nouriſhment to our Souls, miſerably miſpend our precious time, on which inevitably depends Eternity.*

*And this ſhall ſuffice by way of Preface for an Introduction. The door is open, enter, and view well the Motives, and the eternal Sun of righteouſneſs, who is the true Light of the World, open thine eyes to ſee, and guide thy feet into the way of Peace.* Yet

*Yet before the Lecture, I thought good to adviſe whoſoever ſhall peruſe theſe Papers, that here is not to be expected that variety of Arguments which may be found in more Judicious Controvertiſts; but a true Narrative of what principal Motives prevail'd with me to forſake* Proteſtaniſm, *and yield my ſelf into the Arms of our Mother Church. And yet methinks they are ſufficient to convince the ableſt Heads, if they have but hearts reſolved to yield to Truth.*

*I muſt likewiſe tell thee good Reader, that theſe Motives had long ſince ſeen the light, if ſome accidental occaſions had not retarded their birth into the World. However, though they loſt their choiceſt ſeaſon of publication, which*

*is*

*is, when such Conversions are most fresh in memory, yet 'twas thought fit by persons as well judicious as zealous, that they should by no means live any longer in obscurity, but be set upon a Candlestick in the House of God, to give light to others; and I did acquiesce in their judgment, and was content to have them publish'd for the common good. Read them Impartially, consider them Seriously, and practice Faithfully what God shall inspire into thy Soul. And remember in thy Devotions,*

Thine in Jesus Christ,

*E. L.*

The

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*The*

# The First Motive.

## Sect. I.

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*That the two chief externe Grounds or Motives of Credibility leading to the Truth of what Christ and his Apostles taught the World, are* Universal Tradition, *and* Church Authority.

GOD who at sundry times, and in divers manners spoke unto the Fathers by his Prophets; last of all in the fulness of Time reveal'd his Will unto us by his Son: So that the Word was made Flesh, not only as a Saviour to lay down his own Life for our Redemption, and suffer for us, but also as a Law-giver to instruct us what we must believe, and do for his sake and our own good, if we will be sav'd. Before this last and

perfect revelation of all ſupernatural means to attain to Life, deliver'd to the World by Chriſt; the *Jews* were the peculiar people of God, their Synagogue the true Church, and their Ceremonial Rights the True Worſhip, inſtituted by God himſelf, to continue in force during that Pedagogie. But the eternal Sun of Righteouſneſs appearing, thoſe Shadows were in him fulfil'd, and ſo vaniſh'd to give place unto the Goſpel, whoſe glorious Beams were to Enlighten thoſe that ſat in Darkneſs, and the ſhadow of Death, to the uttermoſt Corners of the Earth.

Hereupon there being a change of the Law, it was neceſſary there ſhould be a Tranſlation of the Prieſthood alſo, (the time being now come foretold by *Malachy*, *That from the riſing of the Sun to the going down thereof, Gods Name ſhould be great among the* Gentiles, *and they ſhould Sacrifice in every place, and a Pure Offering ſhould be offer'd to his Name.*) a new form of Worſhip, preſcrib'd a new form of Government erected, new Sacraments inſtituted, new Precepts deliver'd, Councels ſuper-added, agreeable to the Evangelical Law; And in a word, a *Catholick*

*Mal.* 1. 11.

*Church*

*Church* founded to continue for ever.

This Church of Chriſt, as it is one body, ſo likewiſe it was of one heart and of one mind, while Apoſtolical purity remain'd unſpotted. The Profeſſors were all united in the ſame Faith, Worſhip and Government; holding cloſe to Church-Tradition, the Pillar and ground of Truth, without any rent or Schiſm; *Till among themſelves aroſe Wolves in Sheeps-cloathing, not ſparing the Flock; teaching perverſe things to draw away Diſciples after them*; That is, who ſet up a Congregation of Chriſtians ſeparated from the Communion of that Church which was founded by Chriſt and his Apoſtles. And ſo by this means unity being deſtroy'd, and Faith perverted, Hereſie ſhut up the gate of Heaven, againſt falſe Chriſtians, as Infidelity did againſt Unbelievers. *Act.* 20. 29. 30.

A ſad caſe this; yet not ſo much to be wondred at, ſeing the Apoſtle tells us, *Opportet eſſe Hæreſes, There muſt be Hereſies for the Tryal of others, and greater glory of the Truth.* And therefore the true Church hath in all Ages been more or leſs vex'd with them. 1 *Cor.* 11. 19.

But never more then in these last and perillous days, which since *Luther*'s Apostacy from the Church of *Rome* have produc'd such an innumerable brood of New Gospels and Sects; all pretending to believe and practice those Doctrines and that Worship, which were taught by Christ and his Apostles; and to be the only true Church of God, or at least the purest Members of it.

Now it being acknowledg'd on all hands, that they only are the true Church, who believe and observe all points taught by Christ and his Apostles necessary to Salvation, and 'tis impossible, contrary Beliefs and Worships should be all true, and come from the Fountain of Truth, Christ Jesus, those whom a more serious desire and care of their Eternal Good may excite to seek for satisfaction in so important a business, shall upon diligent inquisition, by the blessing of God, find, that the chief externe grounds or evidence ordain'd by Christ for the guiding us in the knowledge of what was taught and left by him, to be believ'd and practis'd tot he Worlds end; and consequently also for discerning which is the

true

true Church among ſo many Pretenders, are thoſe, according to which the Church of *Rome* regulates her Faith and Worſhip; namely, Univerſal Tradition, and the Authority of the preſent Church, as ſhall hereafter be made manifeſt: And the farther they ſearch into the Rule of the *Proteſtant Religion*, that is, ſole Scripture interpreted by private Reaſon or Spirit, excluſively to Tradition and Church Authority; the more they will ſee ſuch unſteady Maxims are deſtructive to Faith, and manifeſtly leading to endleſs Diviſions and Errors in matters of Religion. This Conviction I had in examining the Fundamentals of the *Roman* and *Proteſtant* Religion, and therefore am not to be blam'd for the Change I made; and to my underſtanding, whoſoever ſearches as I did, will eaſily receive the ſame ſatisfaction.

## SECT. II.

### *A Preparatory Diſcourſe to* Church-Tradition., *and what it is.*

THo' whoſoever examines aright the Motives of Chriſtian belief, cannot rationally but become a *Catholick*; that is, find evidence how he may come to the certain knowledge of what Chriſt and his Apoſtles taught the World; yet Faith is not grounded on Reaſon, but Authority; and that no leſs then Divine, which excludes all poſſibility of Errour. Whatever it is that brings men to know what they muſt believe, Faith hath for its formal Object Divine Revelation, into which it finally is reſolv'd. So that we believe nothing as of Faith, but what is reveal-led; and becauſe it is revealed by Eſſential Verity, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived. *Catholicks* then believe by Divine Faith, Truths only revealed by Almighty God, wherein *Proteſtants* agree with us. But *Catholicks* believe the ſame Truths as they are aſcertained, declar'd and handled down

down to us by the Teſtimony of the Church, wherein *Proteſtants* are defective; the difference thefore between us in Faith, ariſes chiefly from hence, in that we uſe not the ſame externe *Medium* to convey unto our underſtandings the knowledge of what Truths are revealed, and what not. For could we once agree about this latter, we ſhould ſoon be of one Heart, and of one mind in all points of Faith, eſpecially when once this *Medium* is proved to be infallible.

As to this *Medium* therefore *Catholicks* regulate their Faith by the Rule or Standard of *Tradition* and Church-Authority as the externe Proponent of Faith, a Proponent alſo evidenced to them by the ſame Rule to be Infallible, and thus they ſafely rely on the Teſtimony of Tradition and Church-Authority in Declaring and Expounding both the Senſe of Scripture, and all other Chriſtian Miſteries neceſſary to Salvation. Whilſt on the contrary, *Proteſtants* relying on the ſole expreſs Texts of Scripture, interpreted by private Reaſon or Spirit, as their only Rule and Guide in matters of Faith, become unſteady in their Belief, ob-

noxious to dangerous Errors, and divided amongſt themſelves into endleſs Sects and Factions. But becauſe a more clear underſtanding of this matter in ſome ſort depends on a right notion of Tradition, we ſhall here define it in the ſenſe it is uſually underſtood by *Catholick* Divines.

*Tradition* then is the delivery of that Doctrine which was taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, from hand to hand, deſcending as ſuch from Fathers to their Children, making up the body of the Faithful. This is the true notion of Tradition among us *Catholicks*, and it matters not whether it be call'd Divine, Apoſtolical, or Univerſal, being only the ſame thing expreſt by divers adjuncts: For it is call'd Divine, becauſe Chriſt our Lord, as well true God as true man, is the Spring-head of it. It is call'd Apoſtolical, becauſe the Apoſtles immediately receiv'd from him things ſo deliver'd, and Preach'd them to all Nations. And Univerſal, becauſe Atteſted by the *Catholick* Church of all Ages to have been handed to her as originally proceeding from Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

And to prevent all miſtakes, let *Proteſtants*

*teſtants* take notice that the Church of *Rome*, ſends not her Children only to ſearch for what is Divine or Apoſtolical Tradition in matters of Faith and Diſcipline out of the Writings of the Fathers, or other Libraries of Books fill'd with dead Words, which are ſubject to various Interpretations by Critical heads, without any hope of Agreement; and can have no Authority dependent on Tradition; (though upon this account ſhe has infinite advantage againſt all other Communions in the World, to juſtify her Faith and practice, in any unbyaſs'd Judgments.) But ſends them to a viſible, living Oracle, Oral Tradition, that is, the voice of the preſent Church, atteſting that what ſhe teaches as of Faith, ſhe ſo received from the Age immediately foregoing, and ſo from Age to Age, from Millions of Sons to their Fathers, up to the Apoſtles, and the Sacred Mouth of Chriſt himſelf.

From Church-Tradition thus explain'd, briefly may be drawn thoſe Poſitions.

Firſt, that the Doctrine taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, compriſes all points neceſſary to ſalvation.

Secondly,

Secondly, That all ſuch points taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles have been continued in the Church from believing Fathers to their Children, by an un-interrupted ſucceſſion, without Diminution or Addition, and ſhall ſo continue for ever. Which involves theſe two Propoſitions; that nothing comes to us upon the tenure of Faith but what is of Tradition. (Yea, though contain'd in Scripture, ſeing we only are aſcertain'd what Books the Apoſtles wrote, and what is the true ſenſe of them, by Tradition.) And that there are no new points of Faith in the Chriſtian Church, *quoad Subſtantiam*, as to the ſubſtance of what is reveal'd; the preſent Church only believing what it received from precedent Ages. Which aſſertion whoſoever oppoſes, contradicts not me, but the Sublime Angelical Doctor St. *Thomas*, expreſly teaching that in *Doctrina Chriſti & Apoſtolorum* &c. 22æ. 1 q. ar. 10. *ad* 1*am*. *&* 2*am*. *Et in* 1a. *par*. *q*. 32. *ar*. 4. *corp*. In the Doctrin of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, the Truth of Faith is ſufficiently unfolded; but becauſe perverſe men pervert the Doctrin of the Apoſtles and other Doctrines and Scriptures, to their

their own Deſtruction, as is ſaid in the 2 *Ep.* of St. *Peter*, and the laſt Chap. Therefore the explication of Faith was neceſſary againſt ariſing Errors in after-times, not containing another Faith, but the ſame more clear'd.

Thirdly, That this univerſal Tradition, or handing of Chriſtian Doctrin by oral Teaching, and viſible practice of the Chriſtian World, is, and was the conſtant Rule of Faith, as well after as before the Scriptures were written, and received by the Church.

The firſt *Theſis* or Poſition, though it hath been deny'd by ſome Hereticks, as namely the *Montaniſts*; yet is not controverted between us and *Proteſtants*. The proof lies upon the ſecond; which being demonſtrated, the third will follow of it ſelf, and cannot be deny'd with ſhow of Reaſon.

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SECT.

## SECT. III.

### *The clearneſs and certainty of* Tradition *in delivering Matters of Faith.*

NO other externe prudential evidence or aſſurance in matters of Divine Faith, (whoſe efficient Cauſe is Divine Grace,) is neceſſarily requir'd, then a Moral certainty, that what is propos'd to be believ'd as of Faith, is the very ſame Doctrin which was taught by Chriſt, and his Apoſtles. Which aſſurance neither is, nor can be had among *Proteſtants*, who build their new Church upon their own confuſed and unſteady Interpretations of Scripture: But is manifeſtly to be found in that Communion of Chriſtians, *viz.* the Church of *Rome*, which grounds its Faith as to ſuch evidence, upon Univerſal Tradition; a Principle not well lyable to Error, and therefore cannot rationally be expected to fail thoſe who relie upon it. As I ſhall endeavour to demonſtrate thus.

Chri-

Chriſtian Religion is ſupernatural, deſcending from Heaven to us by Revelation; that is, ſuch a one, as is not to be learn'd but from Almighty God and his Miſſioners; namely from Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and ſo ſucceſſively from them brought down to us by Church-Profeſſion. Wherefore the Apoſtles being Commiſſionated by him to whom was given all Power in Heaven and Earth, to this end and purpoſe, deliver'd to the World wholly and entirely the Law of Jeſus Chriſt; making ſo long ſtay in thoſe places principally in which by mutual conſent they had choſen to plant the Goſpel, 'till by often inculcation it was written in their hearts, and by practice ſo confirm'd and clear'd to their Judgments, that rationally they could not miſtake or doubt concerning any points ſo deliver'd; all things being by this means ſufficiently provided for the conſtituting and governing of the Church. Now though the Apoſtles were many, yet being all taught by the ſame Maſter, impowered by the ſame Commiſſion, and guided by the ſame Spirit, in all parts of the World did bring up their Diſciples in the belief and practice of the

the ſame Doctrin and Diſcipline to continue for ever, ſo that all particular Churches, though of different Nations and Languages, founded by ſeveral Inſtructers, and ſo far diſtant from one another, yet did harmoniouſly meet in the unity of Faith in all points Traditionary whatſoever. Neither could it be otherwiſe, they only believing what was taught them by the Apoſtles: and theſe only teaching them what they receiv'd from Chriſt, and were Infallibly directed in by the extraordinary aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt. Amongſt which Apoſtolical Doctrines, one main Article was, *That there ſhould be in all Ages to the Worlds end, an Univerſal Viſible Body of Paſtors and People, term'd a* Catholick *Church, Divinely aſſiſted and authoriz'd to preſerve, teach and hand down to Poſterity, without Error, all Truths neceſſary to Salvation.*

This *Catholick* Church thus founded, practis'd and taught their Children what they received from the Apoſtles; condemning by her Authorative Rule of Tradition all ſuch for Hereticks and Shiſmaticks who taught any contrary Doctrines, and divided from them.

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By this eaſie method all Critical Diſputations about points of Faith were cut off, having only to inquire what had been taught and practis'd from the beginning, and to receive all Doctrines witneſſed for ſuch by the voice of the preſent Church, *The Pillar and ground of Truth*, and conſequently Infallible in her Atteſtation. Who leave this Rule, muſt needs be obnoxious to Error; but how thoſe who ſtick cloſe to ſo ſafe a Principle ſhould fail, is morally inconceivable. For ſuch Traditionary Doctrines (abſtracting from Authority) cannot looſe, but gather ſtrength by time, becauſe the multitude of Believers increaſing, and delivering to their Children all points of Faith as they received them, the Tradition becomes more famous and univerſal, carrying along with it a greater evidence of Truth, and moral Impoſſibility to be deceiv'd. Unleſs we will ſay that the Myſtical Body of Chriſt ſo diffus'd and numerous, can forget to day what they believ'd and acted yeſterday, and ſo ignorantly miſtake; or knowingly conſpire together to teach their Children to receive any Doctrines as originally proceeding from Chriſt and his Apoſtles,

1 *Tim.* 3. 15.

Apoſtles, which yet they never had from their immediate Fore-fathers upon that tenure. Queſtionleſs that ſuch a Body of Chriſtians ſhould be wrought upon wilfully to damn their own and others Souls, by attempting to gull the World to their faces in a buſineſs of no leſs then Eternal Intereſt; or that in things of ſo high a nature, ſo viſible, ſo eaſily contradicted, they ſhould prevail to introduce the belief of a noonday Lye, is ſurely to be rank'd in a high degree of Impoſſibility. And whoſoſever ſees it not as ſuch, I know not whether all the *Hellibore* in *Anticyra* will cure him.

For where can one pick a hole in the everlaſting coat of univerſal Tradition, to make a way for Error or Hereſy to creep in at? Does it not ſhine bright in the viſible Practice and Profeſſion of the Church ſcatter'd over the whole World, ſo continually expos'd to all mens Eyes and Ears, that it cannot be conceiv'd, how Doctrines ſo deliver'd, ſhould be innovated without diſcovery and oppoſition, or periſh unleſs with the ruin of Chriſtianity? If *Proteſtants* conſidered this aright,

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aright, they could not deny the preſence of the Body and Blood of Chriſt in the Bleſſed *Euchariſt* by a real change of the Conſecrated Elements; ſubjection to the Biſhop of *Rome* as Supreme Head of the Church under Chriſt; Invocation of Saints and Angels, the Sacred uſe of Images, Veneration of Reliques, private Confeſſion to a Prieſt, Indulgences, Extream Unction, Purgatory, Prayer for the Dead, to be Apoſtolical Doctrines; being handed Traditionally to us from Age to Age, by an Univerſal and more Viſible Practice than the Scriptures themſelves; which yet they receive, as the Word of God, upon the ſame Authority: Neither could they demand of us a farther proof of what carryes along with it in its very face, an Evidence of Credibility beyond all Exception. Nor ask of us in what ſecret Repoſitaries of the Church theſe Traditions of the Church are preſerved; when they might in a manner as rationally demand whether it be day, when the *Sun* is in the *Meridian* of our *Horizon*.

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In vain therefore do *Proteſtants* pretend Innovation in Faith, to juſtify

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In vain therefore do *Proteſtants* pretend Innovation in Faith, to juſtify

their Separation from the *Catholick* Church; for let them chuſe what Age they will, this Principle is equally ſure rationally evident alike in all: And as firmly eſtabliſh'd now in the atteſtation of the preſent Church, or in the days of King *Henry* the Eighth, when the Fatal Defection from the Church of *Rome* in *England* firſt began, or in the Sixth, or Fifth, or Fourth *Century*, (for they cannot agree about the time) as in the very next Age ſucceeding the Apoſtles; and conſequently all Traditionary Doctrines of Faith Taught and Atteſted by the voice of the preſent Church of any Age, the ſelf ſame for ſubſtance which were at firſt deliver'd to the Saints without Encreaſe or Diminution: Univerſal Tradition, and Innovation in Faith being in a manner ἀσύστατα, and Incompatible. And what Arguments ſoever the *Proteſtants* produce to the contrary in their Controverſial Skirmiſhes, is meerly the playing of Wit againſt Pure Evidence.

If any one ſhould ſeriouſly endeavour by Elaborate Arguments to perſwade us really, that there was never ſuch a man as King *Henry* the 8th. King of *England*, would we not think him

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Fool or mad-man for his pains. Seing that if it were not true, millions of persons, not only in our own three Kingdoms, but in other Nations, of Credit and Reputation, without any causes sufficient to produce such an effect, must conspire to be notorious Lyers: And natural reason tells us, if the first Reporters had not related it of their own knowledge with undeniable evidence, it would never have obtain'd to pass so constantly and uncontroulably as it doth without the least doubt or question. And yet thus have *Protestants* lost the immemorial Possession of their Ancient Faith, and misled with meer Sophisms, will not believe those points to have been handed to us by Tradition from the Apostles, which are attested for such by infinite multitudes of People of several Nations in their respective Ages to this present; with a far more transcendent evidence of Credibility than the former instances. Notwithstanding, such is the blindness of some mens understanding, or rather the hardness of their hearts, that as the Scripture saith, *Matth.* 13. *v.* 14. ***Seeing they will not perceive, and hearing they will not understand, that they may***

*be healed*; Though it be a Rule, plain, certain, and expos'd to all mens view in ſuch viſible Characters of publick practice, that who runs, may read, as well the Unlearned as the greateſt Schollar; and upon which the *Pope* and Peaſant depend alike for their Salvation.

Wherefore to contract this Argument; ſeeing ſuch vaſt multitudes of ſeveral Nations cannot miſtake in what hath been a thouſand times over and over inculcated unto them, clear'd to their Judgments, and rooted in their Hearts by continual practice; ſeeing that a World of Believers cannot conſpire together to Damn themſelves, and Coſen their Poſterity in matters of the higheſt moment, whereof men are moſt tender and tenacious; ſeeing mankind cannot give credit and entertainment to any Doctrine to which their daily Religious Worſhip gives the Lye, and cannot be accepted without the deſtruction of ſome evident Principle, of which they are in preſent Poſſeſſion as Divine and Apoſtolical: (unleſs ſuch a Doctrine bring with it a manifeſt demonſtration of Truth, which is impoſſible to be done in any point of

Faith

Faith controverted between *Proteſtants* and *Catholicks*:) Seing theſe are the ſafe and ſure Grounds of Univerſal Tradition, truly methinks, whoſoever will not acknowledge it for a Rule or Evidence ſufficient in points of Faith, but deſires a more certain or manifeſt conduct, to bring him to the knowledge of what Doctrines Chriſt and his Apoſtles taught the World: Or who is ſatisfi'd with leſs, that is, with a Rule which may eaſily deceive him in a buſineſs of Eternal Intereſt; ſeriouſly ſuch perſons ſeem to me not Impartial Searchers; and if ever it pleaſe God to clear up their underſtanding in Divine matters, they will confeſs it.

## SECT. IV.

### Universal Tradition, *the Churches Rule of* Faith *in all Ages.*

DId not *Protestants* of the Church of *England* pretend to Antiquity as on their side against the *Catholicks* in this Controversy about the Rule of Faith; any farther Discourse of this Subject for the present had not been necessary, but because such is their claim, I shall take some pains to shew the Injustice of it; and let the Reader see, that as well in this as other points they who are our Enemies, have no Friends of the Fathers to maintain them in their opposition, but are equally Contradictors of Them, and Us, Yet before I shall urge Authority, I shall press them with Reason.

The Apostles, having among other necessary points of Christian Faith, rooted this Doctrine in their Disciples hearts. To believe only what was delivered to them; and also guarded it with

the thunder and Lightning of Excommunication, even againſt an Angel from Heaven, that ſhould preſume to teach otherwiſe; (becauſe of points neceſſary what was to be the Rule and ground of all the reſt, was moſt carefully to be preſerv'd,) one would think, underſtanding heads could not doubt that the Fathful were to receive and hold their Faith upon the ſame tenure of Tradition to the Worlds end, as attèſted to them by the publick voice of the preſent Church. Yet queſtion'd it is, and contradicted alſo by *Engliſh Proteſtants*; but doubtleſs they do not conſider as they ought. *Gal.* 1. 8, 9

Firſt, That the Church being in the poſſeſſion of this Belief upon the tenure of Univerſal Tradition, (unleſs they can demonſtrate ſuch a tenure actually to have fail'd in this particular) muſt needs acknowledge this point concerning the Rule of Faith to be Apoſtolical.

Secondly, They do not conſider, that ſeing it cannot be deny'd, but Tradition was at firſt the uſual means of Planting and Conſerving the Law of Chriſt, the greater part of the World being converted before the Scriptures

were written and receiv'd by the Church, ſo that when any falſe Teachers did ariſe, they of neceſſity had recourſe to Tradition, whether they had been ſo Taught; and not to Scripture, whether it was ſo written, being impoſſible to Rule before it had a Beeing: I ſay, this being undenyably evident, they will never be able to give a rational account to Intelligent perſons, why an immutable Faith ſhould have a mutable Rule, and a ſtanding Edifice ſhould have a moving Foundation. If they think to ſalve this ſoar, by ſaying Tradition was neceſſary 'till the written word took place, they will never be able to prove that all things at firſt delivered neceſſary for the Salvation of the World, were afterwards committed to writing by the Apoſtles. And yet 'till this be done ſatisfactorily, who ſees not the inſufficiency of this aſſertion?

But then Thirdly, if they could prove, that the whole Law of Chriſt neceſſary to Salvation, at firſt Traditionarily convey'd, was afterwards entirely committed to writting by Infallible Inſpiration, and depoſited in the Church; They do not conſider, that

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were it ſo, (as moſt certainly they will be never able to prove) yet it is neceſſary, Tradition ſhould be the Rule of Faith, as well after as before the reception of ſuch a Canon, it being impoſſible for Scripture by its ſelf to perform, what Tradition did without it in the beginning. For dead words being capable of endleſs controverſy, becauſe lyable to various Interpretations; Hereticks will either ſhrowd themſelves under the Umbrage of obſcure Paſſages in Sacred Writ, or darken plain places with Metaphors or Clouds of witty Criticiſms, ſo that no evident Conviction can be had, or poſſibility to hold up Church-unity in Faith and Government; except the controverted Doctrines be brought for their tryal to the Touch-ſtone of Oral Tradition, which, with the ſame unerring voice delivers Scripture and the true ſenſe of it to the Houſhold of Faith in all Ages. And therefore it is, that we find *Tertullian*, and other Ancients affirming, *That no good can be done with* Hereticks *by diſputing out of Scripture to reduce them to Truth.* And if we will not take their word, our own experience is an evidence beyond all exception.

*Lib de Præſcript. c 19.* *S. Irenæ. cont. hæreſ.* *St. Aug. cont. Ep. Fund. Vinc. Lyri. in Com.*

Laſtly,

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Laſtly,

Laſtly, they do not conſider, that as in Natural Sciences there are ſome *Prima Principia*, fundamental Axioms, which need no proof, into which all Concluſions rightly from them deduced are reducible: So in ſupernatural Revelations there muſt be ſome ſelf-evident Principle a Rule of Faith, into which, points of Faith are reſolvable having it ſelf no need of further probation as to ſuch evidence. Or elſe we run in a circle, not having any ſatisfactory ground, upon which we may without any more ado, rely for the Truth of what we believe. Now Scripture is not, nor can be ſuch a Principle; it depending manifeſtly, as *Proteſtants* themſelves acknowledge, on Tradition, by which we only come certainly to know and accept it for the Word of God; and ſo is the Rule of Scripture as well as of other neceſſary points, and conſequently the ground or evidence of what we believe upon Scripture-Authority. Which yet is not to be underſtood, as if Tradition made the Word of God Infallible, but that thereby we are rationally aſſured what is Scripture, and the true ſenſe of it; which otherwiſe is ſubject to

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perpetual quarrells, of Diſſenting minds.

For my part, I ſee not how *Proteſtants* can anſwer this Argument; for they acknowledging Tradition to be the Rule of Scripture, and contending for Scripture to be the Rule of Faith, Tradition muſt neceſſarily be the prime Rule, that is, the Rule of their Rule, and antecedent ground of their foundation. And ſo by unavoidable conſequence, all their Faith is built upon the credit of Tradition. See it clear by a parallel. We *Catholicks* rely upon the Church for points of Faith; will *Proteſtants* therefore ſay that we rely not upon Tradition? For in relying upon the Church, we rely alſo upon what the Church relyes, which in all points of Faith is Tradition. We rely upon the Church immediately as an Infallible Guide, we rely upon Tradition as an extern Evidence. 'Tis eaſily applicable to *Proteſtants* receiving the Scriptures upon the credit of Tradition: Who, while they ſhun it as a ſtone of Offence, fall upon it as a Rock of Foundation. And truly 'till they ſhow us ſome other ſelf-evident Principle, which can aſſure us

what

what Doctrines Christ and his Apostles taught the World, we must believe and maintain Universal Tradition to be the Fundamental Rule of Faith to the Christian Church in the sense hitherto explain'd.

Thus they might be satisfied with reason in this controversy; but because they pretend to be mov'd more with the Authority of the Fathers, than our Arguments, they shall hear them speak; and truly, (one would think,) plain enough, to their condemnation.

Witness St. *Irænens*, an *Anti-Protestant* certainly while he teaches; **What if the Apostles had not left us Scriptures, ought we not to have followed the Rule of Tradition, which they delivered to those to whom they committed the Churches.* Which is not to be understood, as if because they have left Scriptures, the order of Tradition is by them evacuated; but that revealed Truths depending on Tradition only, are as Divine and certain, as if no Scriptures had been left unto the Church by the Apostles. Or else we make the Saint; while he is showing the excellent use and neceffity of Church-Tradition, so Incongruous as to

* *Lib.* 3. *cont. Hær. c.* 4.

to say there is no need of it at all. But Arguments might be spar'd, when the following instance of Nations believing by Tradition only, without Scripture, makes his meaning evident.

Before him in the front of the second Age B. *Ignatius* St. *Johns* Disciple; *Exhorted the Churches to hold themselves inseparably to the Tradition of the Apostles*; as *Eusebius* testifies. Had the Rule of Faith been only Scripture, as *Protestants* contend, could he have given such advice? Yea, it inevitably implyes, Tradition to be the sure ground to rely upon for Christian Doctrines. *Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 35.

Doth *Origen* assert Scripture or Tradition for a Rule while he teaches, * *That in our understanding Scripture, we must not depart from the first Ecclesiastical Tradition, nor believe otherwise then as the Church of God hath by Succession deliver'd to us*? And elsewhere he tells us, *That only is to be believed for Truth, which in nothing disagrees from the Tradition of the Church.* What more full for *Catholicks*? * *In Tract. 27. in c. 23. S. Matt.* * *In Præf. lib. περὶ ἀρχῶν.*

Did not *Tertullian* depend upon Tradition for his Faith, when he professeth, * *What I believe I received from the* * *Lib. de Præsc. c. 21*

*the preſent Church, the preſent Church from the Primitive, That from the Apoſtles, the Apoſtles from Chriſt.*

The *Arrians* indeed (as the *Proteſtants* now) appeal'd to Scripture for a ſole Rule and Judge of their Faith, ſeeing their condemnation (as *Proteſtants* do likewiſe) inevitably and evident by the practice and Tradition of the preſent Church. But what did St. *Athanaſius*, that great Bullwark of *Catholick* belief, reply to this? Even the very ſame which, the Church of *Rome* now takes up againſt her Adverſaries: *Behold, we have prov'd the Succeſſion of our Doctrine deliver'd from hand to hand, by Fathers to Sons; but as for you new* Jews, *and Children of* Caiphas, (*but as for you* Proteſtants) *what Progenitors can you ſhow of your Speeches?* Had he not held Tradition for the Rule of Chriſtian belief, could he have produced this as a ſatisfactory anſwer to their appeal to a Scripture-Tryal, and a ſufficient demonſtration of *Catholick* Faith?

* *Lib. de Decr. Sym. Nic. cont. Arianos.*

They who hear St *Auſtin* ſaying, **I would not believe the Goſpel, were it not that the Authority of the Church mov'd me to it.* What think they? Was he

* *Cont. Ep. Fund. c. 5.*

for

for *Proteſtants* or us; for ſole Scripture, or for Tradition too in his Controverſy?

More ample ſatisfaction may be had, if deſired, from *Vincentius Lyrinenſis*, in whoſe words we may tell a *Proteſtant*, * *Faith is that which thou haſt received, not that which thou haſt devis'd, a thing not of private uſurpation,* (as their Expoſition of Scripture are) *but of publick Tradition.* * *Cont. hær. ca. 27.*

Quotations might be infinite, but theſe may ſuffice to let the World ſee, that Antiquity was of the ſame belief with the preſent Church of *Rome* in this point; And *Proteſtants* by contradicting Her, contradict the Fathers alſo.

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SECT.

## SECT. V.

### Tradition *asserted against* Protestants *by* Scripture; *and the notable Advantages that way of delivery hath above Writing.*

IF the Testimony of the Fathers will not suffice, we shall bring Scripture it self in defence of *Tradition*. And truly to me it seems wonderful, that *Protestants* professing to believe all things contained in the Scriptures, should deny *Tradition* to have any thing to do with their Faith, to which those Sacred Oracles bear so great witness. The places are not few, and full; some of them I shall produce as translated in their own Bibles.

The first is that famous *Anathema* of St. *Paul*'s upon the occasion of some false Teachers troubling the Church of *Galatia*, with Doctrines contrary to *Tradition*. * *If we, or an Angel from Heaven, Preach any other Gospel unto you then what ye have received, let him be accursed.* Would they have one more

1 *Ch. ver.* 8, 9.

more expreſs? Let them mind well his exhortation to the *Theſſalonians*, * *Therefore Brethren, ſtand faſt, and hold the Traditions ye have been taught, whether by word, or our Epiſtle.* Eph. *cap.* 2. v. 15.

The ſame point he preſſes home to the firſt Biſhop of *Epheſus*, writing in his firſt Epiſtle to him, * *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy truſt, avoiding prophane and vain bablings, and oppoſitions of Science, falſely ſo called; which ſome profeſſing, have erred concerning the Faith.* Which *Depoſition* of Faith he calls ὑποτύπωσιν ὑγιαινόντων λόγων, in his ſecond *Epiſtle* renewing the ſame charge, *Hold faſt the form of ſound words which thou haſt heard of me, in Faith, and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*: Inculcated alſo in the Verſe following, *That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghoſt which dwelleth in us.* And again, in the 3*d*. Chapter he preſſes it as the only Antidote againſt the Infection of new-poiſonous Doctrines ſcatter'd by Seducers, *Continue in the things that thou haſt* Chap. 6. v. 20, 21. Chap. 1. v. 13. v. 14. Chap 3. v. 13, 14.

*haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them.* And with no leſs care and charge recommendeth it to Poſterity, in the 2*d*. Chapter of the ſame *Epiſtle*; *The things that thou haſt heard of me among many Witneſſes, commit thou to Faithful men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo.*

From which Texts, and ſuch like, the Fathers collect three things.

Rom. 16. Phillip. 4. 12. Judes *Ep.* 3*d. ver.* 1 Tim. 3. 15.

First, *That there are* Traditions *unwritten, as well as the written Word, depoſited in the Church, which is the Pillar and ground of Truth.*

Secondly, *That ſuch* Traditions *belong equally to Chriſtian Doctrine, and alike to be credited and obſerved. Written and unwritten being but accidental differences of the word of God, ſubſtracting or adding nothing eſſential to the formal Object of Faith, which is Divine Revelation.*

*St.* Baſil. ut habetur Hiſt. Trip *l.* 7. *c.* 39. Vinc. Ler. *c.* 26, *&c.*

Thirdly, *That* Traditionary *Doctrines being termed a* Depoſitum *by the Apoſtle, and ſo from him frequently call'd* Depoſitum Fidei; *and the Governours of the Church,* in Timothy, con-

*conſtituted the ſacred* Depoſitarii *and Keepers of it, makes it uncapable of any addition or diminution, (and conſequently excluding the expectation of any other points neceſſary to be revealed) the nature of a* Depoſitum *requiring it ſhould be kept unalterable in the hands of thoſe to whom it is committed. And therefore* ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν *applyed to falſe Teachers by the ſame Apoſtle, is directly oppoſed to this* Depoſitum. *And the Church collected in General Councils, when truth and peace requires it, makes no new Articles of Faith; but all her endeavours are, that revealed Truths, whether written or unwritten, deliver'd from the beginning, may be defended, conſerved, illuſtrated, and explicated againſt ariſing Hereſies that would pervert them.*

To which a fourth may be added, *That the Apoſtle writing to Churches fully conſtituted, ſtill refers them in his Epiſtles to* Tradition *for the trial of all* Doctrines; *thoſe ſacred lines delivering no new point of Faith, but only in as much as Doctrinal, in things*

*neceſſary, explicating according to preſent circumſtances, and confirming what had been taught by word and practice.*

*Proteſtants* indeed will owne no ſuch things from theſe Texts; but St. *Chryſoſtom* tells us, * *Hinc perſpicuum eſt*, &c. *From hence it is apparent, that the Apoſtles have not deliver'd all things by Epiſtle, but alſo many things without writing: Now both thoſe, and theſe deſerve equally to be believ'd. 'Tis a* Tradition, *what would you more?* Thus he, and *Theophilact* comments thereupon almoſt in the ſame words: And from the 2*d. ver.* of the 11*th. chap.* of the 1*ſt. Epiſt.* to the *Corinthians*, * *Now I praiſe you Brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the Ordinances,* ficut tradidi vobis, *as I delivered them unto you:* Not only inferrs the ſame Doctrine, but likewiſe uſes the ſelf-ſame phraſe, *Ex hoc loco perſpicuum eſt*, &c. 'Tis apparent from this place, that he (St. *Paul*) and the other Apoſtles, delivered many things not

*In 2 Epiſt. ad Theſſ. c. 2. 15.*

not committed to writing. Which *Epiphanius* alſo applyes to the ſame purpoſe, teaching us, *Oportet autem & Traditione uti*, &c. *That we muſt make uſe of* Tradition, *ſeing all things cannot be taken out of ſacred Writ. The Apoſtles have delivered ſome things in Writing, and others by* Tradition; Even as St. *Paul* ſays, *Sicut tradidi vobis*; *As I have delivered to you.* And no leſs St. Baſil, *It is an Apoſtolique thing to perſiſt conſtantly in* Tradition *not written*; for ſaith the Apoſtle, *I praiſe you in that you are mindful of whatſoever thing came from me, and obſerve the* Traditions *which I have given you.* And affirms them to be ſo many, that the day would fail him ſhould he enumerate them. Moreover, That no man will contradict it who hath the leaſt experience in Church Laws. And as potent Patrons of the ſame Doctrine are St. *Iræneus l. 3 cont. Hær. ca. 3, & 4. Tertullian de corona militis cap. 3. & lib. de Præſcrip. S. Aug. Ep.* 118. *ad Januarium*; *& lib. 5. de bapt. cap.* 23.

Hære. 61.

*Lib. de ſpir. S.*

*Ibid.*

*Ibid.*

The ſecond famous *Nicene Council* in the *7th.* Act, *&c.* by whom *Traditionary* points are invincibly vindicated.

And teach otherwiſe they could not, except their words ſhould contradict their Faith and practice; though *Proteſtants*, who are of a contrary belief, are alſo of a contrary Doctrine; and have invented ſeveral evaſions to darken the evident light of theſe Texts, whereby they (alas) deceive poor Souls. To the native luſtre of Scripture, if we add the unanimous conſent of the Fathers expounding them for us, they more manifeſtly make good againſt the *Proteſtants*, that the ſame Scriptures cannot be an un-errable and compleat Rule of Faith to Chriſtians without *Tradition.* And indeed *Catholicks* do not deny Scriptures to be a Rule, but that they are not the compleat Rule of Faith; nor can be a Rule of Faith at all, as interpreted by private reaſon, or particular fallibility. Congregations, (which is their new way, and

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practice

practice) but as expounded authoritatively by the *Catholick* Church according to the line of *Eccleſiaſtical Tradition*; the conſtant cuſtom of all Ages.

Now why Religion was ſetled in the Chriſtian Church by Univerſal Tradition, as a perpetual Rule of Faith, rather then written Precepts, will preſently appear to any one, well conſidering how that way of delivery is far more ſecure from miſtakes and errours than Writings, this being notoriouſly viſible in actions common to all mankind, in which all ſorts of conditions do agree, and can read the inward belief of their hearts in thoſe outward well-underſtood expreſſions: whereas written words are different, and if underſtood by ſome few eminently Learned, yet lyable to a thouſand caſualties, and miſapprehenſions, conveying erroneous Thoughts ſometimes, even where exacteſt diligence is obſerv'd. And withall, that it is more laſting then written Books, which may periſh totally by

the fury of Perſecution, or be loſt by ſome accident or other, as moſt certainly ſome Scriptures are; Whereas Chriſtian Doctrine thus conveyed, cannot periſh but with the total ruine of all Believers. But principally, that ſacred Scriptures themſelves, both for Canon, Incorruptneſs, and true ſenſe of the Text, are neceſſarily depending on *Tradition*; not *It* on them, being a ſelf-evident Principle that needs no proof.

Which great and notable advantage will be more evident, if we conſider that the main end and principal errand of the Apoſtles being to deliver entirely to the World the Goſpel, or Law of Jeſus Chriſt, what they Preach'd throughout the whole World, with their common and united endeavours, inculcating it in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon, and ingrafting it by daily and viſible practice in the hearts of Believers, muſt needs deſcend to us with more certainty and evidence of Truth, becauſe accompanied with a higher

degree of *Tradition* than the Books of Scripture; which were not any part of their Commiſſion, or by any joynt conſent intended to comprize the whole Law of Chriſt; but meerly an occaſional work of their Apoſtleſhip, according as the preſent circumſtances did require, writt by ſome ſingle Apoſtle or Evangeliſt, ſent to ſome particular Church or Perſon, (as all the Apoſtolical Epiſtles) upon whoſe Authority and Credit the whole Church originally muſt rely, to believe it to be the true Writing of ſuch an Evangeliſt or Apoſtle, that is, to be the undoubted Word of God.

And this is the genuine reaſon, that while Traditionary Doctrines being on all hands acknowledg'd, becauſe founded in Univerſals which cannot eaſily fail: The true Books of Scripture, becauſe at firſt of particular and unknown Authority, (agreeing therein with all errorus) were cauſeouſly rejected by ſome particular Churches, and could not obtain due veneration and acceptance

tance but by degrees, as they were communicated to other Chriſtians by thoſe to whom they were at firſt delivered, and ſo at laſt upon diligent inquiſition received by the whole body of Believers for Canonical. In which examination, the *Traditional* Doctrine being univerſally Famous, and firſt planted in their hearts, and that of Scripture originally obſcure, and of an after Birth; They neither did, nor could rationally argue thus: The Doctrine we have been taught, is the Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, becauſe agreeable to this Book: But thus, this Book atteſted to us for Scripture, may ſafely be received for the Writing of ſuch an Apoſtle or Apoſtolical man, as they witneſs who have already accepted it for ſuch, becauſe we have no reaſon to think they are herein deceived, or lye againſt their Conſcience, in that we find it conformable to the Doctrine we have been taught and have received by Tradition. For to have proceeded *è converſo*, had been to prove

prove, I ſay not *obſcurum per obſcurius*; but *clarum per obſcurum*, and contrary to all Rules of Logick and Reaſon.

Hence it is that we find the Ancient Fathers expounding ſome Texts of Scripture for Traditionary Doctrines of the Church, which afford ſometimes perhaps ſcarce probable Topicks for thoſe points to which they are applyed. Now this they do, not as if they founded their belief of ſuch Articles upon the Scriptures (as might be ſpecified in the 1*ſt. Corin.* 3. from the 12 *ver.* to the 16. and *Matth.* the 5*th. ver.* 25, 26. for *Purgatory.* The 15 of the foreſaid *Epiſt. ver.* 29. *For a ſtate wherein the dead may be help'd by the living. Luke* the 1*ſt. ver.* 34. *For the perpetual Virginity of the Mother of God*, &c.) But being in poſſeſſion of the belief of ſuch points with the preſent Church of their Age upon the tenure of *Tradition*, they only bring ſuch places for the further confirmation and explanation of their Faith, that very probably ſuch Traditionary points

*St* Aug. *de Civ. Dei l.* 20. *c.* 24. *lib. de fide & Oper. c.* 15. *S.* Am. *in ca.* 3. *ad* Cor. *St.* Jer. *in ca.* 5 Matt. Origen *in eundem locum*, &c.

points may be involved in thoſe Texts. So that we may ſafely argue thus far from ſuch expoſitions; they held ſuch Tenets, or elſe they would not have applyed thoſe places for the confirmation of ſuch Doctrines, though ſuch Doctrines cannot manifeſtly be concluded from thoſe places. And therefore when *Proteſtants* rationally ſhow, that ſome Texts ſo applyed by the Fathers may admit their Interpretations; yea ſometimes perhaps with greater probability, they muſt not think they then carry the cauſe againſt Them and Us in thoſe points. This indeed is enough for *Catholicks* to do in all Controverſies of Faith againſt *Proteſtants*, who depend wholly upon Scripture, as explicated by Wit and private Reaſon or Spirit for their Religion; But it is no concluding argument againſt ſome Ancients for their over-credulity, as I may ſay, in relying on ſuch Texts for ſome points now denyed by *Proteſtants*; or againſt the preſent Church of *Rome* as relying upon them, when

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that

that the Fathers neither did, nor doth the Church of *Rome* now only rely upon ſuch Texts for thoſe particular points; nor yet upon Scripture for any point of Faith at all, but as handed and ſenſed to us by *Tradition.*

But to conclude this point, ſeing Scripture thus manifeſtly deſcends to us by a lower degree of *Tradition* than Chriſtian Doctrine; and being received for the Word of God upon the credit of *Tradition* by *Proteſtants* themſelves; we cannot enough wonder at their unreaſonable prevarication, in taking the Churches word for the whole Rule of their Belief, and yet refuſing to rely upon her credit for any one Article of Faith; in acknowledging her Authority Infallible in the delivery of the Letter, and yet denying to believe her *Tradition* for the Sſenſe; nor will be perſwaded to conform to her in thoſe points and practices which are handed to us by her atteſtation with far greater evidence of credibility. And this being

ing clear to me, could I any longer continue a *Proteſtant*? Had I not all the reaſon in the world to become a *Catholick*?

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The ſecond ground of the firſt Motive, *viz.* The Authority or Infallibility of the Church in determining all Controverſies concerning Faith; and defining what is of Faith, and what not, when call'd in queſtion.

## SECT. VI.

### *An Introductive Diſcourſe concerning the Judiciary Power of the Church.*

YEt notwithſtanding this certainty of *Tradition*, handing from Age to Age the Evangelical Law with ſo much evidence, unreaſonable men have aroſe of perverſe minds,

minds queſtioning and contradicting the Truths of Jeſus Chriſt; Inſomuch, that hardly, yea, perhaps not any one fundamental point of Chriſtianity, but hath been controverted in ſome Age or other. Wherefore as *Tradition* is a conſtant Rule, ſo the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Almighty God hath provided in his Church an Authoritative Judge, to give Sentence by the guidance of the ſaid Rule, if there happen to be contentions about matters of Faith among Believers. For unleſs in ſuch caſes an Authoritative Judge be allowed to give a definitive Sentence from which there is no appeal by the contending Parties, for the deciſion of ſuch Controverſies, Authoritatively aſſuring us what Doctrines were taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, if denyed, and what not; when falſly pretended, *Actum eſt de fide & unitate*, Faith and Church-unity muſt neceſſarily be deſtroyed and all Religion loſt in a Chaos of diſagreeing judgments, without any probability of reconcilement.

A ſupreme and unerring Judicature being then abſolutely neceſſary for the ordering and preſerving of the Church in all things eſſential to Salvation; how little ſatisfaction (and that not without juſt cauſe) I received in this point from the *Engliſh Proteſtants*, who indeed grant a Judge, but one wholly Inefficacious to this purpoſe; yea impoſſible to reconcile Diſſenting Litigants; as the ſuper-abundant experience of above ſixteen hundred years (for all *Hereticks* fly to the dead Letter of Scripture for their refuge,) hath ſufficiently evidenc'd, I ſhall make hereafter appear in the examination of their Rule and Judge; and for the preſent endeavour to demonſtrate how all Chriſtians ought to be contented and acquieſs, as I did, in what the Church of *Rome* teaches, and the *Catholick* Church always hath, and doth practice on ſuch occaſions.

Now what the *Catholick* Church teacheth, and always hath delivered in this point, is briefly this. *That all*

*Divine Truths taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles neceſſary to Salvation, whether Traditionary only, or alſo Written, are depoſited in the Church as a Witneſs to atteſt them, and as a Judge Divinely aſſiſted to Interpret, and give an Authorative Sentence, if their be any Controverſy about them, which all Chriſtians are obliged to believe and follow under pain of Damnation* A Doctrine brought down to us from the Apoſtolical Times by a more viſible practice and unqueſtionable Tradition than the Scriptures themſelves, which yet the *Proteſtants* receive for the Word of God upon the ſame Authority.

What concerns the Church as a Sacred Depoſitory of all Revealed Truths, written and unwritten, hath already been manifeſted in the precedent Diſcourſe: And that the Spouſe of Chriſt is an Authoritative Judge, or Infallible Guide to determine all Controverſies of Faith among her Children, that they may know with ſecurity what to believe and follow according to their Du-

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ty, I hope ſhall be made no leſs evident in the following Sections.

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## SECT. VII.

*That there is a Supreme Viſible* Judge *to decide Controverſies in matters of Religion Inſtituted by Chriſt, Infallible in all points of Faith; to which as ſuch all Chriſtians are obliged to a ſubmiſſion of Judgment under pain of Damnation, is here made apparent from Scripture. And ſome further Reaſons alſo given.*

TO acknowledge a viſible Judge to interpret and apply Laws in Controverſial matters, is ſo conform to common Senſe and Reaſon, and ſo confirmed by the experience and practice of the whole

World in all kinds of Governments, that to deny such a Power from God in his Church, is in effect to say; *That Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, hath not so well provided for the regulating and preservation of his Kingdom and peculiar People, purchased with his own most precious Blood, in order to their eternal Good and Happiness; as meer men, subject to manifold weaknesses and Passions, do by the common Light of Nature and ordinary Principles of Prudence and Discretion provide for the well-being of Families and Commonwealths in Temporal matters.* A Position unavoidably drawing after it so many strange and (to say no worse) dangerous consequences, that they will be here better lamented than insisted upon.

But because *Protestants*, whom I have forsaken, fly to Scripture as the only Infallible Judge in all Controversial matters of Faith; thither I shall bring them first to be tryed, and show them out of those Sacred Oracles of Divine Truth, which they

they acknowledge, what ample and moſt abundantly ſatisfactory proviſion the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Almighty God hath made and left in his Church to bring us ſecurely to the certain knowledge of his revealed will; nothing being wanting on his part, if we neglect not ſo great Salvation.

The chief Texts for the Churches ſupreme Teaching, and conſequently Judging and determining Power, when any controverſies of Faith ariſe, by Commiſſion from Chriſt the Head-ſpring of all Spiritual Juriſdiction, are theſe, and ſuch like: *Go ye, make Diſciples of all Nations, teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you.* And that this Authoritative Teaching is performed by the Paſtors of the Church as his Delegates and Repreſenting his Perſon, is plain from that of St. *Luke*, *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me.* Again, *Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever*

*Mat.* 28. 18, 19.

*Chap.* 10. 16.

*Mat.* 14. 18.

*ſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* And again, *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt; 'till we all come to the unity of the Faith, and be not toſſed too and fro with wind of every Doctrine.* What more expreſs.

Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13, &c.

And yet, if it may be, the Churches Infallibility in the delivery of the Law of Chriſt is taught us in plainer terms; as namely in thoſe Promiſes in St. *John, The Holy Ghoſt whom the Father will ſend in my Name, he ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatſoever I have ſaid unto you. When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you in to all Truth.* And thoſe in St. *Matthew, Teach them to obſerve all things whatſoever I commanded you, and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the World.* And that in the 16 Chap. *Upon this rock will I build my Church,*

Ch. 14.26. Joh. 16.13. S. Matt. ch 28.19. 1 Tim. 3. 15.

*Church, and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* Such a Church as this, thus founded, thus aſſiſted, thus guided, cannot poſſibly teach damnable Hæreſies or dangerous Errors, but muſt needs be the Pillar and ground of Truth, as that glorious Veſſel of Election the great Apoſtle of the Gentiles doth aſſure us.

And therefore we may ſecurely rely upon her word; to do it alſo ſo much concerns us, that not to hear and obey is no leſs then under pain of damnation, and that too from no obſcure Texts. *He that knoweth God, heareth us,* ſaith St. *John, and he that heareth us not, is not of God; and by this we know the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Errour.* 1 *Epiſt.* 4. 6. And that famous place, *Dic Eccleſiæ, Tell it to the Church, and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as an Heathen and a Publican.* *Matt.* 18. 17. Perſons doubtleſs in no fit caſe for Heaven. I'll name but one more out of St. *Mark, Go ye into all the World, and Preach the Goſpel unto every* *Mark.* 16. 16.

*Creature.* And what then, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Plain and ſad places theſe are to all Unbelievers and Incorrigible Hereticks: But eſpecially to theſe laſt, who receiving theſe Scriptures for the Word of God, do notwithſtanding not only not hear the Church Obediently in her delivery of the Goſpel, but with obſtinacy and pride of heart, preſume to teach the Church, and will needs force upon her a new Creed, which was never taught by Chriſt, nor handed to us from the Apoſtles. How can ſuch as theſe eſcape the puniſhment threatned in the above-mentioned Sentences. Their account muſt needs be heavy; and the light they had will only ſerve to augment their guilt.

And I cannot omit for a Teſtimony of theſe and ſuch like Texts againſt *Proteſtants*, that being ſo expreſs and unavoidable for the Churches Authority and Obedience to her; in their firſt Editions of their *Engliſh* Bibles after their de-

defection from the Church of *Rome*, for *Church* they tranſlated *Congregation*, leaſt common underſtandings ſhould diſcover how they were withdrawn from their Ancient Faith by new Doctrines, and Expoſitions ſo expreſly contrary to the Word of God. 'Till afterwards, when by divers Artifices theſe Teachers perceived they had bred in their Followers a ſtrong averſion from the Church of *Rome*, and that they were ſufficiently confirmed in their Errours, the word *Congregation* in the later Tranſlation was turn'd into *Church*, that from the evidence of ſuch Texts they might gain ſome credit to their uſurp'd power, ſet up againſt the pre-exiſtent Authority of the whole Chriſtian World.

Neither is it without reaſon, that Chriſt hath ſet up in his Church ſuch a ſupreme Judicature; when to deny this Power to thoſe whom he hath appointed for ever to be Governours of his Kingdom on Earth, is doubtleſs to advance the *Jewiſh* Synagogue, above the *Chriſtian* Church.

Church, their *Sanedrim* or *Great Council*, whesein the High-Prieſt was ſupreme Judge in all doubts and queſtions about the Law, having ſuch abſolute Authority in giving Sentence, that no man could appeal, but was bound to obey under pain of death. And yet that was but a temporary Pedagogy delivered by *Moſes* a faithful Servant of the Houſe of God, in Types and Shadows prefiguring and leading to Evangelical Perfection, whoſe Miniſtration is far more glorious, endowed with more tranſcendent and admirable Priviledges, foretold by the Prophets, and in plenitude of time fulfill'd, revealed and eſtabliſhed in Perſon by the Eternal Son of God, Lord of all things, upon better Promiſes to continue for ever.

*Deut.* 17.

Secondly, Chriſt our Lord having ſo dearly purchas'd a peculiar People, and furniſh'd his Church with all means neceſſary to the Salvation of mankind; if we deny ſuch Authority in her, namely Infallibility

to

to witneſs, and when circumſtances require, to determine by a finally deciſive unerring Sentence what theſe means are, they cannot be effectual to the end for which they were with ſo much Sweat and Blood Inſtituted to continue for ever; being otherwiſe, according to the ordinary method of Divine Providence, impoſſible to be known with an aſſured certainty, and by conſequence alſo to be put in practice. Neither indeed could it be truly ſaid that Chriſt hath provided in his Church all things neceſſary for our Salvation without this Authority; when amongſt things neceſſary that queſtionleſs ſeems to be moſt ſo, by which we can only come to a certain knowledge of all the reſt.

Thirdly, ſeeing God hath made his Church a Proponent and Witneſs of his Truth in all Ages, (for that of the *Acts*, *Ye ſhall be witneſſes to me, both in* Jeruſalem *and all* Judæa, *and in* Samaria, *and unto the uttermoſt parts of the Earth*: As to the 1 ch. 8.

the ſubſtance of it; belongs not only to the Apoſtles, but to their Succeſſors in the Office of making Jeſus Chriſt and his Law known to the Worlds end,) the unanimous conſent of the *Catholick* Church muſt needs be an undoubted teſtimony of revealed Verities, ſeeing it contradicts the Juſtice, Goodneſs, and Veracity of God to authorize any to be a witneſs of his Truth, that might lye and deceive the World in their atteſtation. And methinks it concerns as well *Engliſh Proteſtants* as Us, to maintain the *Catholick* Church for an Infallible Witneſs, ſeeing at this diſtance from the Preaching of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; they, as well as we, have no other Infallible aſſurance then her Teſtimony whereby to know either, which are the undoubtd Books of Scripture, or what the true meaning of them. And thus that Religion (which *Proteſtants* pretend to be contain'd in only Scripture, muſt rejecting Church Authority neceſſarily float in an Ocean

Ocean of incertainties, and we miſerably be left in the myſts of conjectures among dead Letters, with the twi-light of natural reaſon, to ſearch out Faith, and the Eternal Salvation of our Souls.

Laſtly, the fore-quoted Texts being ſo expreſs for the Church to have a Power from Chriſt to oblige all men under pain of Damnation to believe and ſubmit to her Propoſals as to Faith. God hath alſo endowed her with Infallibility in bringing to our knowledge revealed Verities, ſeeing otherwiſe ſuch a Power in the Church, and a correſpondent obligation in her Children would not bear an equal proportion. And therefore theſe two are inſeparably link'd together, a Power to bind to Believe, and Infallibility in the Obliger; Chriſt aſſiſting his Church with his Holy Spirit to guide her Infallibly into all Truth, becauſe he hath inveſted her with a Power to bind to believe; and giving her a Power of obliging to believe, becauſe he hath made her

her Infallible in ſuch Propoſals. It ſeeming moſt conformable to the Divine Goodneſs and Providence, that ſuch an externe proponant of Faith ſhould be eſtabliſhed, as might afford no juſt cauſe to ſuſpect whither it be true or no, which is propoſed; and in all reaſon no greater aſſurance can be deſired then to have an abſolute certainty that that Authority cannot err in points of Faith, to whom we muſt in ſuch Propoſals captivate our Wills and Underſtandings. For this is but to aſſent upon undoubted evidence; then which nothing is more agreeable to mans nature. Neither is it rational to believe that God, who is eſſential, Reaſon and Wiſdom, ruling all his Creatures according to the ſeveral Diſpoſitions Imprinted in them, would impoſe ſuch a Duty on Diſcourſive Entities upon other terms.

Bleſſed be God who hath ſo carefully provided for us, in giving us a Law which is the only means to Salvation, and alſo an authorized guide

guide to direct us in the certain knowledge of it; namely the *Catholick*, which cannot possibly lead us into errour, as hath been formerly shewn. *Lead Catholick Church*

Thus certainly these Scriptures witnessing the Churches Authority are agreeable to reason; now let us see what further light can be added to them from the Writings and universal practice of Antiquity.

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## SECT. VIII.

### *The Churches Authority or Infallibility taught and asserted by the Ancient* Fathers.

IF I should produce what Antiquity affords us on this Subject, I should rather transcribe Books than Passages, so Copious and Industrious have the Fathers been on all occasions

*S.* Athana. *coni.* Aria. *S.* Hier. *S.* Aug. Pole. *S.* Cyp. *de Unit. Ecc. Tert.* &c.

caſions to preſs a point ſo neceſſary; eſpecially in their *Polemical* Diſcourſes againſt *Hereticks*, to vindicate their dear Mother the Church in her Juſt Rights and Priviledges againſt all Rebellious contradictors of her Authority. And thither I refer ſuch as deſire more ample ſatisfaction; for the preſent I ſhall content my ſelf with ſome few choice places, and they are theſe.

*We muſt believe* (ſaith *Irenæus*) *thoſe Prieſts that are in the Church, thoſe that have a Succeſſion from the Apoſtles, who together with the* Epiſcopal *Power, according to the good pleaſure of the Father, have received the certain gift of Truth.*

*l.* 1. *cont. hæ. ca.* 49.

*We muſt not believe*, (ſaith the *Engliſh* Proteſtant Church,) *thoſe who in their* Epiſcopal *Chaires have had an un-interrupted Succeſſion from the* Apoſtles; *ſeek not for the Law of God from their Lips, for they are fallen from the Truth*; *yea*, General Councils *can err, and have erred in their Definitions, having no certain gift of Truth by Divine aſſiſtance.*

Art. 21. *of the* 39.

Thus

Thus they, flatly contradicting good *Irenæus* and Ancient Doctrine. Now, whom shall we believe? The old *Saint*, or the new *Protestant*?

Give him a little more Audience, for he proceeds thus, *The Church shall be under no mans judgement, for to the Church all things are known, in which is the perfect Faith of the Father, and of all the Dispensations of Christ; and firm knowledge of the Holy Ghost, who teacheth all Truth.* But say he what he will, *Protestants* will assume a Power to judge, and condemn her of no less gross and damnable Errours then Idolatry and Superstition, to justify that thing they call the *Reformed Church*. Though it were no difficult matter for them to perceive the Injustice of such Proceedings, when the same Saint goes on and tells them, and us, *That it is easie to receive the Truth from Gods Church, seeing the Apostles have most fully deposited in her as in a rich store-house all things belonging to Truth. For what if there should arise any contention of some small* Cap. 62. l. præd.

*queſtions, ought we not to have recourſe to the moſt Ancient Churches, and from them receive what is certain and clear concerning the preſent queſtion.* Thus far he. And if this courſe is to be taken, in ſmall queſtions, doubtleſs much more in matters of high concern, as many points are now controverted between Us and *Proteſtants*. In ſuch to be left to our own private conjectures and Interpretations, would be moſt unſafe and unreaſonable. And had *Proteſtants* taken the courſe here preſcribed by the Saint for the inquiſition of Truth, when they firſt raiſed queſtions about Religion, (as in ſuch caſes all Chriſtians ought to do) could ever ſuch a thing as the *Proteſtant* Church have had a beeing or exiſtence? For 'tis as viſible as the Sun, that there was no pre-exiſtent form of Faith in the whole Chriſtian World, according to which they modeliz'd their Religion in *England*, and with whom they communicated, when they divided from the Church

Church of *Rome*, their *Catholick* Mother.

If great St. *Auſtin* was not little in eſteem with our modern *Hereticks*, they might receive full ſatisfaction from him in this point, if they would Impartially peruſe his Writings againſt the *Donatiſts*, and other Enemies of the Churches Faith and Unity. That of his is very remarkable againſt *Creſcontius*; *Though* (ſaith he) *there cannot be produced from Scriptures any examples of ſuch a thing, yet the Truth of the ſame Scriptures is held of us in this matter, when we do that which pleaſeth the whole Church, which the Authority of the ſame Scriptures commendeth; that becauſe the Holy Scriptures cannot deceive us, whoſoever feareth to be deceived with the obſcurity of this queſtion, let him require the judgment of the Church, which the Holy Scriptures without any ambiguity do demonſtrate: To the end that becauſe the Scripture cannot deceive us, whoſoever is afraid to be deceived by the obſcurity of any queſtion,* Lib. 1. cap. 33.

*may have recourſe to the Churches judgment concerning it, which Church the Holy Scriptures demonſtrate without any ambiguity.*

Two things are ſuitable to our preſent purpoſe which are clear from hence. Firſt, that though we may ſometimes doubt what is Truth, yet we can never doubt which is the true Church, demonſtrated to us by the Scriptures; upon whoſe judgment while we rely, we are ſecure from holding any thing contrary to the written Word commending to us her Authority.

Secondly, That though the Scriptures are Infallible and cannot deceive us, yet if we will not deceive our ſelves and kill our Souls by the dead Letter without the quickning ſenſe, we muſt believe what the Church believes, ſubmitting our private reaſon to her publick Interpretation. For elſe let *Hereticks* never ſo much boaſt of Scripture for them, we may tell them in the words of the ſame Saint; *This ye ſeem to do, that Scriptures may looſe all*

*Cont.* Fauſt. *l.* 32. *c.* 19.

*all Authority, while every one may allow or disallow what his own mind suggests to him out of them.* That is, may not subject his Faith to the Authority of Scripture, but subject Scripture to his Faith. It being indeed the property of all *Hereticks* not to take sense from, but to bring sense to those Sacred Oracles, forcing them by manifest distortions or dark conjectures to speak in defence of their prejudicated Tenets; and so make nothing of Scripture, while they seem to value nothing else.

Now what remedy against this intolerable abuse of the Word of God, and everlastingly-quarrel-producing evil but that of *Origen: Quoties*, &c.. *As often as they* (Hereticks) *bring forth* Canonical Scriptures, *which no Christian but believes and assents to, they seem to say; Behold the word of Truth is in our Houses; but we must not believe them, nor depart from the Primitive Ecclesiastical Tradition; nor believe otherwise then as the Churches of God by* *Ho. in Mat. & Præf. l. περὶ ἀρχῶν.*

*succeſſion have deliver'd to us.* And to put them to ſilence with that of *Tertullian. We muſt not appeal to Scriptures, neither is the controverſy to be ſetled upon them, in which either there will be no victory at all, or very uncertain. Yea, there is no good got by diſputing out of Texts of Scripture,* (that is, as interpretable by private reaſon, and play'd upon by wit,) *but either to make a man ſick or mad. But that is only to be believed for for Truth, which in nothing diſagrees from the* Tradition *of the Church.* Thus he, fully agreeing with *Origen* in the fore-quoted place. And I cannot omit here what the glorious Biſhop of *Hippo* hath, ſo appoſite for our preſent purpoſe to his Catechumens; *The Holy Church, the Church which is one, the true Church, the* Catholick Church *fights againſt all Hereſies. She may be reſiſted, but cannot be conquer'd: All Hereſies have gone out of her, as unprofitable branches cut off from the Vine;* (ſee *Proteſtants* your Original) *but ſhe remains in her Root, in her Charity.*

*L. de Præſ. c. 19.*

*S. Auſt. de Symb. lib. 1. c. 6.*

*ty: The gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt her.* Nor that to *Honoratus*; *when therefore we ſee God ſtanding for us, and ſo much fruit and proficiency, doubt we to repoſe our ſelves in the boſom of that Church, which from the Apoſtolical Chair by Succeſſions of Biſhops,* Hereticks *on all ſides barking in vain againſt her, hath obtain'd Supremacy of Power? To whom not to give the chief, is truly either the higheſt Impiety, or harebrain Arrogance.* L. de util. Cred. c. 17.

Thus the Fathers always brought Believers to the Church for a firm foundation in tottering times; there they caſt Anchor, and fix'd themſelves amidſt the ſtorms of Controverſies and Contentions rais'd by unreaſonable men with the wind of ſtrange Doctrines, leſt they ſhould make Shipwrack of their Holy Faith; this ſtill they preſt upon all Chriſtians in doubts of Diſputations, the Church, the Church, believe the Church, the Pillar and ground of Truth, the Sacred *Depoſitory* of revealed Verities, the rich Store-houſe

of all things belonging to Salvation, protected by Christ to the Worlds end, endowed with the certain gift of Truth by the special guidance of the Holy Ghost, founded upon a Rock that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. Which is nothing else but what they had learn'd and received from Scripture and Tradition.

A Truth so convincing, that it extorted from Dr. *Field*, a great Patron of the *English Protestants*, words to this effect: *Controversies are now a days grown to that height, and so numerous and intricate, that few have time to discuss and search into them thoroughly for satisfaction; fewer wit and abilities to do it as such a business of concernment require, that no security remains but to fly into the arms of the Church, and acquiess in her judgments and definitions.* But from words let us proceed to deeds, from the Doctrine to the practice of Antiquity.

*In his Book of the Church.*

SECT.

## SECT. IX.

*The aforeſaid Authority of the Church cleared and demonſtrated by the conſtant practice of all Ages.*

IF we caſt our eyes through the whole Chriſtian World, not a *Popiſh Prieſt* in the exerciſe of his Spiritual Juriſdiction, but is in ſome ſort a practical proof of this Authoritative Power, wherewith the Church is inveſted by Jeſus Chriſt: Yet reſiding more eminently and with larger extent in *Biſhops*, the ſupreme Order of the Clergy, made Overſeers of their reſpective Flocks by the Holy Ghoſt; it appears more glorioufly viſible in the Decrees and Acts of General Councils, the higheſt Eccleſiaſtical Tribunal, determining

termining all emergent Controverſies in Spiritual matters, with *Anathema's* againſt all Contradictors whatſoever. And *Catholicks* in all Ages acknowledging their Sacred and obliging Authority, paid moſt inviolably the juſt Tribute of Obedience to their Deciſions, with ſubmiſſion of their private Judgments and Opinions, however rational before they ſeem'd unto them. So that what points ſoever were once declared to be of Faith by lawful and approved Councils, thoſe who perſiſted in the contrary Doctrines where accounted *Hereticks*; and being juſtly Excommunicated for ſuch incorrigible obſtinacy, ſhunn'd by all the Faithful, as no better than *Heathens* and *Publicans*.

Now I cannot think that *Engliſh Proteſtants* will ſay, though ſuch Decrees iſſued out from General Councils, yet it was by an uſurped Power not of Right; and ſo though ſuch exact obedience was paid by Chriſtians to them, yet it was in their own prejudice, and not of duty

or

or obligation; (though truely in deeds they aſſert it) becauſe they pretend much veneration to the firſt four General Councils; and Biſhop *Montague*, one of the Learnedeſt men they ever had, proceeds ſo far, as to defend againſt his more zealous Brethren of *Romes* ruine the Infallibility of all ſuch Councils in Councils in Decrees of Faith. And indeed (abſtracting from the Inſtitution of Chriſt and Apoſtolical practice) it is ſo notoriouſly unreaſonable a thing, and deſtructive of all Government to deny Oecumenical Synods to be the fitteſt Judges in ſuch matters, that few or no *Hereticks* ever had the confidence abſolutely to diſclaim againſt the Authority of ſuch Aſſemblies as Tyrannically aſſuming a Power over other mens Conſciences in things not appertaining to them; but acknowledging their Authority, ſtill cauſeleſly pick'd quarrells, either about their Calling, or Convening, or Proceeding, or Confirming, or Receiving; pretending them to be

*In his* Appello ad Caſa.

De-

Defective ſome way or other, to juſtify their Diſobedience to their Decrees.

And doubtleſs, as *fitteſt*, ſo if they were not *lawful* Judges in all ſpiritual matters by Commiſſion from Chriſt, the *Supreme Head* of his myſtical Body, and *neceſſary*, when made ſo by preſent circumſtances: the Apoſtles themſelves (when Controverſies aroſe in the Infant-Church among Believers about ſome legal Obſervances) would not have taken this courſe to define thoſe matters; Neither would they have prefix'd to their Decrees a *Viſum eſt Spiritui* Act. 15. *ſancto & nobis*, and ſo juſtly father thoſe determinations upon the Holy Ghoſt, had they not been Divine Sanctions, though made by men, yet according to the appointment and will of God, infallibly aſſiſting their endeavours; Neither would the Univerſal Church in after-Ages have on the ſame occaſions inſiſted in their ſteps, or preſumed in the ſame authoritative ſtile to attribute their Meetings and Deciſions to the

the Holy Spirit. A Power, as Divine, withal ſo neceſſary, that no other way could with ſo much efficacy and ſatisfaction preſerve, declare, or explicate the Faith once delivered to the Saints, extirpate Hereſies, maintain Peace and Unity in the Church, ſtrengthen the Nerves of Eccleſiaſtical Authority, reform Clergy and Laity, and depreſs the Enemies of the name of Chriſt our Lord and Saviour: Inſomuch that *Hooker* (a very learned Proteſtant) pleads ſtrongly for Submiſſion and Obedience to Decrees of General Councels; telling thoſe that are otherwiſe minded, *That the way of Peace they have not known, going againſt the dictates of Nature, Reaſon, and Holy Writ*; And, as I remember, gives inſtance in the firſt Councel celebrated by the Apoſtles, the pattern of what were to follow; whoſe Decrees put to ſilence all former doubts and diſputations, every Chriſtian obeying without the leaſt ſcruple to be miſled by them, and with all readineſs, as if God himſelf had ſpoken to them. *In the Pref. to his* Eccl. Politic.

And

And queſtionleſs the Divine Providence thus order'd, that this main point of the Authority of Councels ſhould as well be delivered to the World by Apoſtolical Practice as Precept, that with greater evidence they might know *whom* and *what* to follow, when queſtions about Chriſtian Doctrine did ariſe; and that after the definitive Sentence of that ſupreme Judicature, all wranglings were to ceaſe, and they had then nothing to do but to obey.

In the *Centuries* immediately ſucceeding, though *Satans* Miſſioners were ſpreading falſe Doctrines to corrupt the Faith, and Perturb the Peace of the Church, yet no Oecumenical Synods could be celebrated, by reaſon of thoſe General Perſecutions which hal'd the Chriſtians to their Martyrdom as far and wide as the vaſt *Roman Empire* had Arms to do it. And indeed all that while the Blood of thoſe Noble Armies of Glorious Martyrs ſpoke as lov'd and as Powerfully for the Faith of Chriſt, as the Decrees of living Confeſſors could

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could have done; ſupplying as it were in that extraordinary manner what theſe had a conſtant Power and will alſo to perform, but no convenience to put in execution. However they met as well as they could, and took the beſt courſe thoſe ſad times would permit to kill Soul-deſtroying *Hereſies*, and keep true Faith and unity alive in the Chriſtian Church.

Afterwards in the time of *Conſtantine* that Great and Glorious Emperour, the firſt publick Nurſing Father of his *Catholick* Mother, when *Arianiſm* had Inſtill'd its Poiſon into the Veins of many Chriſtian Biſhop, or Antichriſtian rather, and ſo diffus'd its Contagion into a great part of the Body of the Church, by denying the Divinity of the Son of God; the firſt Oecumenical and moſt Famous Synod was Celebrated at *Nicæa* in *Bythinia*, *Ann. Ch.* 327. to provide an Antidote againſt his Venemous Infection; where after moſt mature deliberation and debate, the *Conſubſtantiality* of the Son

Son of God with the Eternal Father was defin'd and declar'd by the Council to be of Faith, againſt the Arch-Heretick *Arius* and all his followers.

And the prime end for which General Councils were inſtituted and endowed with this ſupreme Judiciary power, being for the preſervation of the *Catholick* Faith, by the Authoritative condemnation of incroaching Hereſies, the next Oecumenical Synod celebrated at *Conſtantinople*, againſt *Macedonius* and whom he had taught, contrary to the Doctrine of the Church, to deny the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, the third Perſon in the Sacred Trinity. The next at *Epheſus*, where *Neſtorius* the Patriarch of *Conſtantinople* with his Adherents were Condemned for diſtracting Chriſt into two Perſons. And the fourth at *Chalcedon*, againſt the *Eutychians* for contracting Chriſt into one Nature. And ſo others in following Ages to our preſent times were called on emergent occaſions to determine and

*Ann. Ch.* 381.

*Ann. Ch.* 431.

*Ann. Ch.* 451.

and declaring to all Christians what was to be believed as sufficiently reveal'd by Almighty God; and the like practice will be to the Worlds end, when the necessities of the Church require it.

Yet not as making new Substantial Creeds, or precise Articles of Faith not before in beeing, (for that would require new Revelations of God's Will, which *Catholicks* pretend not to, acknowledging Christ to be a perfect Law-giver by himself and his Apostles) but only declaring and explicating what already is revealed when call'd in question. For the definitive Sentence of a General Council in a matter of Faith, includes and presupposes an universal Tradition of that Doctrine, and is but a publick Authoratative and more explicite declaration of what hath been taught by Christ and his Apostles, and what the Church holds upon that tenure, when any Contradictors endeavour to rob us of our Holy Faith.

For *Catholick* Faith always is the ſame, although the Evidence and verbal Notions of that Faith are not always alike; nor is it material, ſo they be but ſound and agreeable to *Tradition*; yea, ſometimes words never before in Eccleſiaſtical uſe, are accepted by General Councils into the Churches language to expreſs her immutable Faith, as circumſtances then require, for the more efficacious redreſs of preſent evils; and preventing all miſtakes of that nature for the future, even in the earneſt underſtandings. For by this means *Catholicks* knowing aſſuredly what to hold and ſtick cloſe to in points controverted, could not be circumvented by the ſubtile inſinuations and wily expreſſions of *Hereticks*, whereby they lie in wait to deceive the unwary, and inſenſibly inſtill into well-meaning Souls their Pernitious Doctrines for ſaving Truths.

And this is the true reaſon why the *Arians* did ſo ſtorm at the word ὁμοούσιος, (*Conſubſtantial*,) and in furious

furious rage cry againſt it as an innovation, when firſt inſerted into the *Creed* by the *Nicene* Fathers as a moſt proper and powerful Antidote againſt their poiſon. And why thoſe Sons of ſubtilty did take ſuch indefatigable pains, and put in practice ſuch curious Artifices to counter-check, or wholly extirpate that term out of *Chriſtian Confeſſions*, as well knowing if that word liv'd and proſper'd in the Church, all their Arts and Eloquence could not eaſily gain more Proſelytes, but their Anti-Doctrine muſt die and periſh. And as upon the ſame account the General Councils of *Lateran* and *Trent* after the unhappy birth and growth of the *Sacramentarian* Hereſy, did make uſe of a new word (*viz.*) *Tranſubſtantiation*, to expreſs more aptly the Ancient Faith; ſo for the ſame reaſon our modern Reformers exclaim againſt that term as a novelty in Religion, becauſe it manifeſtly contains their condemnation, and enervates their main Plea of Reformation.

## SECT. X.

### *A farther Declaration of the Churches Authority or Infallibility in General Councils from Antiquity.*

THE Church of God in all Ages by General Councils giving an deciſive Sentence in controverſies about Faith, as hath been ſhown in the precedent *Section*, each Decree and *Anathema* ſpeaks in deed and reality her Infallibility in ſuch Deciſions. Notwithſtanding leſt perverſe minds or weak apprehenſions ſhould miſconſtrue her Actions, and not judge aright of the grounds of ſuch proceedings; the Ancient Fathers, who beſt underſtood the belief and meaning of their *Catholick* Mother, have in their Writings left undoubted Teſtimonies to the World

World that they cannot erre who follow her voice, declaring by those Assemblies what ought to be believed for revealed Truths.

S. *Athanasius* so famous for his *Confession of Faith* and Sufferings for it, in his Epistle to the *African* Bishops, tells them, that *Verbum Domini per Oecumenicam* Niceæ *Synodum manet in æternum*; Not doubting to affirm the Doctrine of the *Nicene* Fathers to be the Word of God, and of Eternal Verity. From whom and other Fathers the Glorious Emperour *Constantine* had Learn'd to write to the Churches. *That whatsoever is Decreed in the Holy Council of Bishops is altogether to be ascribed to the Divine Will.* S. *Ambrose*, that great maintainer of Ecclesiastical Authority and Discipline, professed resolutely that he would rather part with his Life then the *Nicene* Faith. *Sequor tractatum* Niceni *Concilii, a quo nec mors, nec gladius me poterit separare: The Council of* Nice *is my guide, from which neither Death nor the Sword of*

*In Epist. ad Ecc. apud Sacta. l. 1. c. 6.*

*Epist. 12.*

*Perſecution ſhall divide me.* And what of St. *Hilary* and other *Catholick Biſhops* and *Confeſſors* that ſuffered from the power and malice of the *Arians*, before they would part with one Syllable or Letter of the *Nicene* Faith, by changing ὁμόσιος or ὁμοούσιος (of the *ſame Subſtance*) into ὁμοιούσιος, (of the *like Subſtance*) is well known from the Faithful Records of thoſe times.

*Victor Afri. de Perſec. Wand. ca. 61. Barronius, &c.*

When above ſix hundred Fathers were gathered at *Chalcedon* in a General Council there celebrated, and ſome, perhaps ſecret *Arians*, propos'd the re-examination of the *Nicene* Decrees, it in no ſort would be permitted, the Holy Synod crying out, *Si quis retractat*, &c. *If any one retract, let him be Accurſed. If any one inquires anew about them, let him be accurſed. Curſed be he that adds, Curſed be he that Innovates.* For in ſuch definitions in points of Faith, being rather the Decrees of God than men, ſhould they have been ſubjected to a freſh Inquiſition, had not been ſo much to queſtion the

the Fathers Aſſembled in the name of Chriſt; as the Infallibity of the Holy Ghoſt aſſiſting their endeavours in ſuch Deciſions. Which is not my collection, but the aſſertion of St. *Leo* the Great, both for his Sanctity and Supreme Paſtorſhip in the Church of God, in his Epiſtle to the Emperour *Martian* in theſe words. *Prænoſcat Pietas noſtra Venerabilis Imperator*, &c. *Venerable Emperour, let your Piety firſt know, that whom we ſend from the Apoſtolical Chair, are not directed to combat with the enemies of Faith, we daring not to go about to handle thoſe things which have been defin'd by the good pleaſure of God, both at* Nice *and* Chalcedon, *as if they were weak and doubtful, which ſo great an Authority hath ratified by the Holy Spirit.* And therefore the Emperour, that the ſaid Decrees might be more vigorouſly executed, publiſh'd an Edict, *Strictly commanding humane contentions and Inquiſitions to ceaſe about thoſe matters, and all Chriſtians under the* Roman *Juriſdiction to ſubmit their*

Ep. 78.

*Habetur in codice Juſtini.*

*Judgments to the Decrees of the most Holy Synods:* Becauſe (beſides the penalties of the Laws) they would by ſuch quarrells incurre the juſt cenſure of joyning with *Jews* and *Pagans* againſt the Church. Yet alas *Proteſtants* do ſo, and will needs be the only or trueſt Chriſtians.

*De Bapt. cont. Donat. l. 1.* St. *Auſtin*, the Oracle of Antiquity, tells us, *That though concerning Rebaptization of* Hereticks, *perſons of eminent Learning and Piety did diſpute among themſelves peaceably the queſtion, inſomuch that there were contrary deciſions of particular Councils in the buſineſs, 'till in a plenary Synod of the whole World that which was ſoundly believ'd was without all doubt confirmed.* And elſewhere, *Cont. Parm. lib. 2.* *That concerning the validity of Baptiſm given by any one not a Chriſtian, nothing ought determinately to be concluded without the definition of ſome General Council.* And that concerning the validity of Baptiſm given by *Hereticks* there was no queſtion to be made, being already agitated, perfected, and defined in the unity of

of the whole World. Which had it been done before St. *Cyprians* Glorious Martyrdom, he makes no doubt but the Holy Martyr would have ſubmitted his Judgment to the Authority of an Oecumenical Synod. *L. 7. cont. Donat. ca. 53.*

And therefore that ſaying of the ſame Father, *Priora Concilia nunquam a poſterioribus emendari*; *That former Councils are ſometimes corrected by the later*, is not poſſibly applicable to deciſions in points of Faith, as if ſomething amiſs in ſuch Decrees might be amended; for then the Saint muſt needs contradict himſelf in his well-known aſſertions. And therefore is to be underſtood either of further explications of ſuch points, and then 'tis ſound and *Catholick* Doctrine; or Cuſtomes and Rights appertaining to Church-Diſcipline, which are alterable by the Authority of Councils for the better, as preſent circumſtances ſhall require. And doubtleſs many oppoſite Canons of Lawful Councils may be found in ſuch matters, *Lib. 2. de bapt. cap. 3.*

matters, and makes nothing againſt the Doctrine of the Church concerning her Infallibility. But in matters of Faith no General approved Synods did ever make contrary Decrees; ſo that when any are ſhown oppoſite in words, they may with ſufficient ſatisfaction be reconciled, and manifeſted to agree in the *Catholick* ſenſe of Doctrine therein contain'd.

For could there be really contrary Decrees in points of *Catholick* Faith determin'd, General Councils confirm'd by the *Pope*, and received by the Church, that would be eternally falſe, and moſt unreaſonable, which is ratified for a moſt manifeſt Truth, and moſt agreeable to right reaſon by univerſal Church-practice; namely, *That all thoſe who will not be accounted* Hereticks, *muſt conform themſelves to the Decrees of Oecumenical Synods.* And are the words of *Vincentius Lyrynenſis* in his *Admonitory againſt Prophane Novelties*, a Diſcourſe as expreſs for us, as if it were now *ex profeſſo*

*profeſſo* writ againſt *Proteſtants* in this controverſy.

But not to be tedious, I will cloſe up theſe Teſtimonies (ſo pregnant for the Infallibility of the Church declaring her Faith by *Oecumenical Synods*) with the moſt famous Speech of St. *Gregory* the Great, *Sicut Sancti Evangelii*, &c. *I confeſs my ſelf to receive and venerate the four Councils as the four Books of the Holy Goſpel.* And then names them, yet not with any intention to exclude the like eſteem of the fifth, being the ſecond General Council at *Conſtantinople*, which afterwards he ſpecifies; and were all the General Councils celebrated before his happy Government of the univerſal Church. Neither will the *Proteſtants* be ever able to give any ſatisfactory reaſon why they do not give the ſame veneration and acceptance to all approv'd *Oecumenical Synods*, and in particular to that of *Trent*, being confirmed by the ſame viſible Head, and received by the Body of the ſame *Catholick* Church.

*Lib.* 1. *Ep.* 24. *ad Pat.* Conſtan. & Alexan.

*Ann. Ch.* 553.

And

And to make this more evident; I will make a brief parallel of the *Protestants* Case with the *Arians*, (by them confess'd to be *Hereticks*) by which I think will easily be discover'd that they can say nothing to justify themselves against that Council, but will be as good and strong for the *Arians* against the *Nicene* Fathers; their tryals being alike upon their disturbance of the Peace of the Church with new Doctrines, and their condemnation alike by the same Authority. If they say the Council of *Trent* was not a lawful General Council; did not the *Arians* pretend the same against the *Nicene* Synod, and all *Hereticks* take up the same Plea against the Councils by whom they were condemned? If they say, true, they did so; but They without cause, We justly. Let them give us a demonstration of this, and we are satisfied; and nothing else can carry it in this controversy.

Did not the *Arians* repute the *Novatians Hereticks*, being condemned

demned by a Council, though not General? And yet refus'd themſelves to ſtand to the *Nicene* Synod though *Oecumenical.* Why? The *Novatians*, ſay the *Arians*, *complain without cauſe*; *We juſtly.* Did not the *Neſtorians* and *Eutychians* abhor the the *Arians* as juſtly anathematiz'd by the *Nicene* Fathers, and yet theſe refuſe to obey the Decrees of the *Chalcedon* Council, thoſe of the *Conſtantinopolitan*? Why? The *Arians* contradicted without cauſe, ſay the *Neſtorians* and *Eutychians*, but we juſtly. In a word, 'tis a plea common to all condemned *Hereticks*, with *Proteſtants*; and if they would ſpeak fully, amounts to thus much: *We will receive no Councils farther then they agree with us, and will never acknowledge or ſubmit to any as lawful that condemn our Doctine.* For when they they have a long time hunted up and down for excuſes, this in reality is the only and juſteſt cauſe they have of their diſobedience.

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If they appeal from the Council tothe Scriptures, as in their Opinion ſtanding for them; did not the *Arians* do the ſame? And I dare be bold to ſay with far more probability then *Proteſtants* can pretend to in many points controverted between Them and Us. If they ſay they never had a fair hearing before Sentence was paſs'd againſt them, and that they were condemn'd by their Enemies, being Judges in their own cauſe. Did not, or might not the *Arians*, and any other *Hereticks*, pretend the ſame againſt the reſpective Councils by which they were condemned? And 'tis all one, as if ſome Rebels ſtubbornly refuſing to anſwer for themſelves in a juſt Tryal according to the eſtabliſh'd Laws of the Kingdom which they have tranſgreſſed, ſhould after Sentence pronounc'd complain of Illegal proceedings as not being heard for themſelves, and having no reaſon to plead, where the Party offended was their Judge by his Commiſſioners.

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This is the parallel; And ſeriouſly for my own part in the moſt Impartial examinatiou of it, I cannot ſee any poſſible evaſion for the *Proteſtants*, but that in all Doctrines of Faith wherein they contradict the preſent Church of *Rome*, they are as notorious *Hereticks* by the deciſions of the Council of *Trent*, as the *Arians* for denying the Divinity of Chriſt by the Authoratative Sentence of the *Nicene* Fathers.

And to conclude this *Section* and *Motive*; after all theſe expreſs Texts of Scripture for the Churches Authority and Obedience unto her under pain of damnation; with the ſenſe of them ſo brought down to us by the Writings of Antiquity and Church-practice of her juriſdiction; (which is an evidence that all contrary Interpretations are falſe and ſpurious) for any blinded with Intereſt or Paſſion to venture his eternal Salvation upon a *May be otherwiſe*, or a probable argument deduced from Scripture, leaning on the weak crutches of private reaſon, or

a particular Fallible Congregation, is a ſtrange and dangerous preſumption. For in Fine, the Authority of the *Catholick* Church in ſuch matters, is of more weight than ten thouſand Arguments of private Reaſon. It being a thing manifeſt to judicious men, that there is no place for *Ifs* and *Ands*, where there can be no evidence brought againſt a point of Doctrine, which the higheſt Tribunal upon earth had already Decreed, and propos'd to be believ'd by all Chriſtians, as ſufficiently revealed by Almighty God.

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THE

# The ſecond Motive:

That the *Engliſh Proteſtant Church* making Scripture the only ſufficient Rule of *Faith*, without any Viſible Judge to Interpret and give the Senſe of it Authoritatively to *Chriſtians*, ſtands on a moſt uncertain and groundleſs Foundation.

## Sect. I.

### *An Introduction to the following Diſcourſe.*

THus having by the Grace and Bleſſing of God on my endeavours in the inquiſition of Truth found ſure Principles whereon to

build Faith and Religion, in the *Roman* Church, and no where else; nothing remained; but notwithstanding all interposed difficulties, to betake my self to that Communion, wherein rationally, that is, upon Infallible grounds I was perswaded Truth only was to be found, and Salvation, ordinarily to be expected. However, that I might give the Religion I had profes'd so long a full hearing to the best of my abilities and understanding, before I shak'd hands with it, I diligently examin'd the grounds of the *Protestant* Church and Doctrine, (which too few do,) and after much enquiry, it was evident to me, they could not afford to Impartial Judgments any solid and real satisfaction. For the main Pillar of the *Protestant* Religion, being to make the Scripture the sole Rule of Faith, I finding by clear conviction this foundation to be without Solidity, how could I in Reason or Conscience stand firm to that Church which I saw built on so unstable a bottom. And

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indeed were *Proteſtants* able to perform what they promiſe, that is, to reſolve all Controverſies of Faith by Sacred Scripture, we ſhould be ſo far from being true *Chriſtians*, the beſt of men, that we were worſe than Beaſts if we ſhould refuſe to be judg'd thereby.

Wherefore it is a wrongful Imputation in them to bear the World in hand, that we have not a due veneration of thoſe Sacred Oracles of Divine Truth; when our reverence and reſpect to them is in reality more than theirs, our Canon more general, our Expoſitions more elaborate, humble and ſubmiſſive, and our Aſſent unchangeable to whatſoever the Church declares to be revealed by them, or is contain'd in them evidently by neceſſary conſequence: They in the *interim* only believing by a Spirit with a ſtrange preſumption, what they pleaſe, ſaying and unſaying, (in Civil Wars among themſelves, as well as againſt us, whom they call the common enemy,) what they think is for their

preſent advantage, to ſerve their turn on all occaſions.

And while we neceſſarily urge to all *Chriſtians* the Authority of the Church, as the Pillar and ground of Truth, we are ſo far from intending any diminution of their juſt eſteem, that if they can produce but one ſingle place of Scripture evidently containing the contrary to what we believe, *Conclamatum eſt*, The controverſy is at an end, we will confeſs we are in the wrong; and for this Miracle (for 'twill be no leſs when ever it is done) yield the whole cauſe unto them. But 'till then let them ceaſe to traduce us as *Non-Venerators* of Sacred Writ, becauſe we will not receive it for what God did never intend it; and leave it to his Church: And againſt the evidence of our own Eyes and long experience, acknowledge it to have conditions fit and requiſite for the plain and Infallible inſtruction of all *Chriſtians* of the whole Law of Chriſt, and final deciſion of all Controverſies. For that Scripture

by

by it ſelf cannot perform thoſe neceſſary Offices in the Church, will manifeſtly be made to appear in the following *Sections.*

But firſt I ſhall ſhew that herein they agree with other *Hereticks*, and Diſſent from the Antient Church as well as from Us in this main fundamental of their Religion.

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## SECT. II.

### Hereticks *from the beginning were accuſtomed to Appeal to* Scripture *as the ſole Rule of* Faith *whereby they would be judg'd; in oppoſition to the* Traditionary Doctrine *and Senſe of the* Catholick Church.

THat whatſoever is purely of Divine Faith, depends neceſſary on the Word of God, is

ſound Doctrine; but that all Supernatural Verities revealed to the Church are ſo written in the received Canon, as none can miſunderſtand them, is a moſt dangerous poſition; yet the *Anchora Sacra* and chief refuge of old condemned *Hereticks*, as well as of our modern Adverſaries; who grounding their novel Opinions upon Texts of Scripture as interpreted by their own private Reaſon, do at laſt make them *Heretical* by chooſing pertinaciouſly to adhere to them, againſt the Senſe and Judgement of the Church. A ſad Caſe this, that with the Waters of Life they ſhould ſuck in Eternal Death into their Souls. But alas! Thus they turn Remedies into Diſeaſes, and blind their Eyes with the Heavenly Light of the Word; becoming ſo much the more incorrigible, becauſe they perſwade themſelves (even againſt evidence, (if ſeeing they would ſee) that they have Divine Authority for their Doctrines.

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The *Arians* in the Controverſy between them and *Catholicks* about the Divinity of Chriſt, would admit nothing but Scripture, as St. *Auſtin* teſtifies, bringing in *Maximus* an *Arian* Biſhop thus diſputing with him. *If you produce any thing out of the Divine Scriptures, which are common to all, of neceſſity we muſt give ear unto it: But theſe words which are without Scripture in no Caſe are received by us.* The direct Language of *Proteſtants*, who in this however are perfect *Arians*. *Cont Max. l. 1. Init.*

The *Macedonians* impugning the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt; rejected the *Gloria Patri & Filio & Spiritui Sancto*, whereby the Church profeſſes her belief of a Trinity of Perſons in the Unity of the Divine Eſſence, becauſe not contained in Holy Writ. Witneſs St. *Baſil*; *They* (the *Macedonians*) *ceaſe not to brag up and down, that the Glorification of God with the Holy Ghoſt wants Teſtimony, wants Scripture.* Thus they then, and thus *Proteſtants* now in points controverted between *Li. de Sp. S. c. 25, & 26.*

them and us. But hear the ſame Holy Fathers anſwer, *Verily againſt that they ſay the Preposition*, cum (Spiritu Sancto) *to want Teſtimony, nor to be extant in Scripture, we reply thus: If nothing elſe be received without the Scripture, neither truly let this be received by us without Scripture. let us alſo receive this among many other. For I think it Apoſtolical to adhere to the unwritten* Traditions. You ſee we need not new words to condemn the *Proteſtants*, who will never be able to give any rational ſatisfaction why they receive ſome things not in Scripture only upon the ſcore of Church-Tradition, and yet refuſe other alike commended to them by the ſame Authority. In all reaſon they deſerve an equal reception, and ſo they muſt become *Catholicks*.

*The Church then in her Doxology us'd* Cum Spiritu Sancto, *as* Et Spiritui Sancto

*Eutyches* the *Arch-Heretick* denyed Chriſt to be perfect man as well as perfect God, and for his defence appealed to Scripture. *Ergo a S. Scripturis, &c.* I (ſaith he) *have not learned from the Sacred Scriptures*

*tures of two Natures.* To whom it was replyed, *Neither have we been taught (the word) ὁμοούσιον from Sacred Writ.* Which muſt needs put him to a baſhful ſilence; the verity of Chriſt's Humane Nature being as fully deliver'd in Scripture as his Divine, though not in ſuch expreſs terms as they required: And therefore both either to be neceſſarily receiv'd or rejected by them. But *Proteſtants* certainly have far leſs to ſay for themſelves, who with the *Eutychians* receiving the term ὁμοούσιον not found in Scripture, yet deny the Corporal preſence of Chriſt in the *Bleſſed Euchariſt* by a real, though Inviſible Change of the Viſible Elements, when, *My Fleſh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed*: And again, *The Bread that I will give is my Fleſh, which I will give for the Life of the World*: And the moſt Sacred words of Inſtitution, *This is my Body, This is my Blood*, are plain and expreſs terms, as any Doctrine can be delivered unto our capacity.

*Concil. Chalced. Act. 1.*

Joh. 6. 51, 55.

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The *Pelagians* (to name no more, and only ſuch as *Proteſtants* themſelves repute *Hereticks*) thoſe Arch-Enemies of the Doctrine of Grace ſo abundantly delivered in Sacred Writ, yet fly thither alſo to ſet up Nature againſt it; as St. *Auſtin* who beſt knew, relates of them in theſe words, *Let us*, ſay they (*the* Pelagians) *believe what we read, what we read not, let us believe unlawful to maintain.*

*l. de Nat. & Grat. 39.*

Thus Scripture, was their Sword and Buckler againſt the definitions of the Church whereby they were condemned; neither could they ſo eſcape the brand of *Hereſie*: And *Proteſtants* taking up the ſame Weapons, in the ſame manner, to uphold themſelves againſt the Faith and practice of all Ages, by treading in the ſteps of ſuch Predeceſſors, ſhew ſufficiently of what Generation and Spirit they are, and ſeem juſtly involv'd in the ſame condemnation.

Thus having made good the firſt thing I promis'd in this *Section*, namely,

namely, that the common courſe of *Hereticks* is to have recourſe to ſole Scripture, and to urge it as Interpreted by themſelves, againſt the Churches ſenſe and judgment; to ſpeak any thing of the ſecond, to wit, the different Faith and Practice of the Chriſtian World, would be but *actum agere*, a ſuperfluous labour, being ſo largely before declared in the handing of *Tradition*, and the Infallibility or Authoriy of the Church, and thither I refer the Courteous Reader.

*Sect. 5. of* Trad. *and the two laſt Sections of the Churches Authority.*

Only for the preſent give me leave to ſay, that I carefully comparing both theſe together found manifeſt different Rules of Faith without any poſſibility of reconcilement; old and new *Hereticks* appealing to Scripture, and reſolute to be tryed by nothing elſe, without any viſible Judge to interpret them: The Ancient Fathers and preſent *Catholicks* aſſerting the word of God, whether written or unwritten, as delivered to us by the univerſal *Tradition* of the Church, and declared by her

voice

voice in approved General Councils, to be the only ſufficient and ſure foundation of Chriſtian belief. I found that if theſe built their Faith on ſolid and ſafe Principles, (as it appeared to me they did) the other muſt needs rely on an uncertain and groundleſs foundation for their Religion; and having a deſire to be numbred with the Saints, not *Hereticks* of old, I found I could not be ſo, except I did relinquiſh *Proteſtancy*, and unite my ſelf to the *Roman Church*, of the ſame belief and practice with Primitive Chriſtians.

SECT.

## SECT. III.

### *A declaration of the* Engliſh Proteſtants *Doctrine; how, and why they make Scripture the only Rule of* Faith.

FOr the clearer handling of this point, and prevention of all miſtakes, I ſhall faithfully deliver what the *Proteſtant* Church of *England* teaches Principally in this main fundamental of her Religion; and not injure it, or her, to the beſt of my judgment, by any Obſervations made thereon.

Firſt, ſhe teaches, *That Holy Scripture doth (explicitly) contain all things neceſſary to Salvation, ſo that whatſoever is not read therein is not to be required of any man, that it ſhould be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requiſite and neceſſary to Salvation.* This the Compoſers of her Articles do teach, and this

this they muſt teach who will make the written Word an entire Rule of Faith; that is, comprehending all points neceſſary to Salvation.

Now in all reaſon to ſatisfy thoſe whom they would perſwade to be of this belief, it ought to be made evident, that the Apoſtles in their Writings did intend plainly and perfectly to comprize whatſoever is neceſſary to be believ'd and practis'd by all Chriſtians, and depoſited them in the Church as a complete Rule of Faith for the tryal of all Doctrines, ſhe alſo receiving it for ſuch, and practiſing accordingly in all Ages. Which once done, their poſition is then a moſt clear and rational inference. But this being impoſſible for them to prove, becauſe contradicted by the Faith and practice of the Primitive Church, which could not be ignorant of all Apoſtolical Doctrines and Conſtitutions, and alſo of preſent *Catholicks* receiving them from her by an uninterrupted viſible Tradition, muſt needs be a falſe and moſt dange-

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rous Principle, though laid for the foundation of their Religion.

Secondly, for a further groundwork ſhe teaches, *That General Councils may, and have erred, even in things appertaining to God.* That is, in matters of Faith, as well as of Fact, as her own Expoſitions more freely expreſs her meaning. A Doctrine, the firſt Reformers would never have given place in the foundation of their Spiritural building, even for their own ſakes, but that it was not poſſible their new Fabrick of Faith could ſtand for any conſiderable time without fall of the Churches Authority. Were not they then fit men to be credited, if General Councils may err?

But that which follows, *Wherefore things ordained by them as neceſſary unto Salvation have neither ſtrength nor Authority, unleſs it may be declared that they be taken (explicitely) out of Holy Scriptures,* Is the very quinteſſence of *Anarchy* and *Rebellion*, ſo deſtructive of all Government, (though an Engine made only

ly to batter down the Church) that were it put in practice as here taught, confuſion would cover the face of the earth, and the World would run quickly back into its firſt *Chaos*. For if things ordained by General Councils, have neither ſtrength nor Authority, unleſs it may be declared that it is made out to every private Judgment that they are taken out of the Holy Scriptures; I demand by whom this may be, or muſt be declared. Now let it be conſidered that Church Governours are inſtituted by Jeſus Chriſt, having the Keys of ſo wonderful and tranſcendent power committed to their hands. *That whatſoever they ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever they ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*: With a promiſe from Chriſt, *That where they meet in his Name, he will be in the midſt of them; and that he will be always with them to the Worlds end: And that the Holy Spirit ſhall guide them into all Truth.* I ſay, let this be conſider'd, and if the

Mat. 18. 18.

ver. 19.

Mat. 28. 20.

Joh. 16. 13.

the Decrees of ſuch a Tribunal ordaining concerning points of Faith, and propoſing them to all Chriſtians to be believ'd, as the revealed will of God by his word from Heaven, and neceſſary to Salvation, have no ſtrength nor Authority 'till it may be further declared that they are taken out of Holy Scriptures; thoſe that require this condition to make them obligatory, cannot poſſibly give any reaſonable ſatisfaction to this demand, unleſs they find out ſuch a Judge, who is fitter, and in all probability more likely not to err or deceive us in teaching what are revealed Truths. But how impoſſible this is to be done, any one of an ordinary underſtanding may without much ſtudy determine. Yet while they are in vain attempting it, if men ſhould take their word, as too many have already in denying ſubmiſſion to the Churches Decrees in things neceſſary to Salvation, and likewiſe in vertue of the ſame Principle (as in all equity they extend it) withdraw their obedience from

the Secular Magiſtrate in his neceſſary commands, as he Judges, for the publick good, 'till it be made out to them, that they are in the preſent matter, though not taken out of the Holy Scriptures, yet agreeable unto them; doubtleſs all Government and Order is brought to nothing, and their Edicts and Laws will be evacuated, as often as the pride, or prejudice, or paſſion, or Intereſt of Subjects ſhall think them not warrantable from Holy Writ. Neither could ſuch ſad effects be hindred from daily breaking out to the Worlds diſquiet, were they not curb'd in with fear of preſent puniſhment: For when they, who are thus taught, think themſelves ſecure from the laſh, their deeds ſufficiently evidence what Temporal Magiſtrates are to expect from their hands.

But to ſtick cloſe to the Church which they have forſaken. If they think they have kept firm ground enough for Church Authority to ſtand upon by inſerting theſe words,

*In*

*In things neceſſary to Salvation*; thereby implying, that though her Decrees in things neceſſary to Salvation, have no ſtrength or Authority 'till it may be declared (not by her ſelf, for ſhe hath already made her declaration) that they are taken out of the Holy Scriptures, yet in things not neceſſary and indifferent, her Authority is abſolute and independent on ſuch a declaration, with an obligation of obedience from Believers: If this, I ſay, be their meaning to keep up Church-Authority, it will not do the buſineſs, but is only to put a Reed in Chriſts hand inſtead of a Royal-Scepter, and to allow his Church a Mock-power onely in Spiritual matters; as will eaſily appear to any one conſidering the end for which our Lord and Saviour ſet up a Government in his Church. For having founded and furniſh'd his Church with plentiful means for the Salvation of mankind, and inſtituted a Government therein to conſerve and apply thoſe means, that they might be effectual

for the foreſaid end and purpoſe, Church-Governours cannot poſſibly make a ſufficient application, as Co-workers with God by his appointment in the great work of our Salvation, if their Power extended it ſelf abſolutely to things indifferent without which we may be ſaved, and in thoſe things neceſſary to Salvation can ordain things, 'till a Declaration from God knows whom and when, makes it good and valid. For they tell us not by whom, or when, this Declaration muſt be made in ſuch Caſes, but inveloping their conceit in general words, only deliver that what *Oecumenical* Synods ordain in things neceſſary to Salvation have no ſtrength nor Authority, 'till it may be declared that they are taken out of the Holy Scriptures. Is this Doctrine conſiſtent with the end of Church-Government? Would not thoſe Superiours be inveſted with a goodly power, who can without diſpute bind their Subjects hands from ſcratching their own Faces, but have no obliging Authority

rity to hinder them from thruſting a Sword into their Bowels, or ſtriking a Dagger to their Heart? Hath Chriſt given ſome Apoſtles, Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors to feed and govern his Church, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, 'till we all come into the unity of the Faith, and yet what points they teach as neceſſary to Salvation, have no ſtrength nor Authority, 'till their Diſciples and Learners of them ſhall declare that they are taken out of Holy Scriptures? Would God exact of Church-Governours an account of their Subjects Souls committed to their Charge, threatning to require their Blood at their Hands if any periſh through their negligence, and yet not inveſt them with an Authority eſſentially requiſite for the ſufficient diſcharge of ſo dreadful a duty? What ſays St. *Paul* to this point? *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves; for they*

*Ephes.* 4.

*Acts* 20. 26, 27.

*Heb.* 13. 17.

*watch for your Souls, as they that must give an account for them.* Now comes the *Engliſh Proteſtant* Church with a Paraphraſe, and teaches, *Obey them that have the rule over you, who watch for your Souls becauſe they muſt give an account of them, and ſubmit your ſelves to their commands and order in things indifferent, and not neceſſary to Salvation; but obey them not in what they teach and ordain, as, without which, Salvation cannot be had; for ſuch Decrees have no ſtrength nor Authority 'till it may be declared that they are taken out of the Holy Scriptures.* Can any Conſcientious or Rational man poſſibly perſwade himſelf that this is the Apoſtles meaning?

Thirdly, the *Engliſh Proteſtants* teach, *That the Church hath power to Decree Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in Controverſies of Faith.* Had they ſtopt here, and ſtood to it, they had ſoon return'd to their *Catholick* Mother. But forſooth it is with this Proviſoe, *That ſhe ordain not any thing that is contrary to Gods word;*

*word; nor expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another.* But never tells us who ſhall be this Judge to determine when her Decrees and Orders are contrary to the Word of God, or not; or when ſhe gives the true ſenſe of Scripture according to the Analogy of Faith, ſo that one place be not repugnant to another: And ſo leaves us in a maze for our Salvation.

They had denyed the *Catholick* Church Repreſentative to be an Infallible Witneſs of the Truths of Jeſus Chriſt, and Authoritative Interpreter of Scripture, to guide Believers in the true ſenſe of it; and ſo it would have been too a notorious Inquiſition to have aſſum'd it to their Conventicles; wherefore having taken away the Pillar and ground of Truth, the Churches Authority or Infallibility, they laid no other ſure foundation, nor ſet up any other determinate Column to uphold Religion, but leaves it in uncertainties to certain ruine.

Well fare the Churches under St. *Paul's* care and governance, who had receiv'd a Power not for deſtruction, but edification, and could
2 Cor. 10. 8. do nothing againſt the Truth, but for it: The *Engliſh Proteſtant* Church can do nothing for the Truth, but againſt it; has no Power at all for edification, but only for deſtruction. Neither indeed might ſhe exerciſe her new aſſum'd Juriſdiction without deſtroying her ſelf, when ſhe could not be builded up but by pulling down to patch up a Fabrick out of the ruines. For the Compoſers of her Articles did very well perceive if they admitted the Church to be the *Authoriz'd Viſible Judge of the Senſe of Scripture by the Rule of Tradition*, ſhining bright in the practice of the whole Chriſtian World, and immemorial poſſeſſion of ſuch points they contradicted, it was not poſſible to eſcape the Sentence of condemnation; but in the Controverſy giving a deciſive power only to the dead Letter of Scripture, (the refuge of old condemned

demned *Hereticks*) they feared no *Anathema* while themſelves were Interpreters. And having the ſupreme Magiſtrate on their ſide to prohibite *Catholicks* to ſpeak for themſelves in any publick defence, it was eaſie to delude vulgar apprehenſions with this plauſible Sophiſm, *The* Papiſts *refuſe to be try'd by the Word of God.*

Which things whoſoever layes together, and ſeriouſly ponders, as I did, cannot but diſcover that the *Engliſh Proteſtant* Reformers did not receive a Rule of Faith from the *Catholick* Church, which had been the Square of Chriſtian belief in all Ages, and is to continue ſo for ever, but invented (or rather aſſumed from their Predeceſſors the Ancient *Hereticks*) a Rule of Faith for the Church they were ſetting up, whereby they thought their new Doctrines might with moſt likelihood be maintain'd, and found no better expedient then by denying an authoriz'd Viſible Judge to pronounce a definitive Sentence in Con-

Controverſies of Faith, that ſo they might keep in poſſeſſion of what they had uſurped by eternally wrangling about the right.

But that we may come to ſome iſſue by bringing them out of a myſterious *may be declared*, to ſtand to ſomething in this main Principle of Religion; admit that the written word were the ſole and perfect Rule of Faith, it being impoſſible for dead Letters of themſelves to rectify things applicable to them for that end and purpoſe, they muſt needs acknowledge ſome animated Judge to perform this Office among Chriſtians by applying the Rule to all particulars. Now they having denyed the Church this right, and ſo caſt off her living voice and Authority in plain terms, though inſiſting in generals, they aſſign no other determinate Interpreter, yet muſt have recourſe to Reaſon, or Revelation; for beſides theſe three I know not any. I ſay, they muſt either let private Reaſon make this declaration, and Judge of the true

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ſenſe of Scripture, by her innate Light; or flie to Revelation, and pretend that the Holy Ghoſt Infallibly declares by a Divine Light his meaning to them.

This later way of Divine Inſpiration is laid claim to by the *Calviniſtical* party, and thoſe ſtrange broods of other *Engliſh* Sectaries. who have nothing but Scripture and the Spirit of God in their mouths, upon whom in a moſt Prodigious manner they Father all their Blaſphemies, to the ſhame of Chriſtians. But it is rejected by all *Proteſtants* in any degree rational as meerly *Fanatical*, and invincibly convicted of Impoſture by the manifeſt contradictions of ſeveral pretenders to the Spirit of God. For can the Holy Ghoſt reveal to the *Calviniſts* that the Government of the Church by *Presbytery* hath a Divine right from Scripture, and by the ſame Divine Unction teach the *Independents* that it is againſt the written Word, *&c.*

Private reaſon therefore is only left them to reſolve their Faith into, and

and rely upon in their inquiring after and belief of Supernatural Truths, and those sublime Mysteries, to the knowledge of which nature hath not sufficient Light to advance her self, by her sole native powers; beside those mists of passion, or prejudice, or Education or Interest, to which we are daily lyable, and which must needs make this way more dark and difficult in order to eternal Happiness. However they must take to it, unless they will openly recant what they have publickly approved. For though at first they kept secret this grand mystery of their State-Religion, yet at last great Patrons of the *English Protestant* Church have with Authority and much applause inthron'd private Reason as a sole Queen and Mistress in the Churches Chair, to direct and interpret the Holy Scriptures, and from them to give a final Sentence what are the Truths of God revealed to us. Without which Sentence or Declaration the Churches Decrees in things necessary to Salvation

*Mr.* Chillingworth *&c.*

vation have no ſtrength at all, or obligation. Nor then neither, as theſe *Rationaliſts* explain it, upon the ſcore of Authority, but Reaſon only. But how unreaſonably and without ground, I doubt not to make appear in the following *Sections.*

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## SECT. IV.

### *That the Holy Scriptures are not the ſole and perfect Rule of* Faith.

TO evidence the groundleſſneſs of this main foundation of the *Engliſh Proteſtant* Church, as declar'd and explicated in the precedent *Section*, with full ſatisfaction, I conceive it lyes upon me principally to make three things good againſt them.

Firſt, That Scripture is not the ſole and perfect Rule of Faith.

Secondly,

Secondly, That it is not, nor can be the Judge of Controverſies in Religion. Which is the common Tenet of modern *Hereticks*.

And thirdly, That admitting it for a Rule of Faith (as in part it is) private Reaſon is not the Interpreter and Judge of the true ſenſe thereof, for every Chriſtian to rely upon for his Salvation.

In clearing the firſt point I need not labour much, having already by convincing arguments eſtabliſh'd in the 4*th*. and 5*th*. *Sections* of the firſt Motive, the *Catholick* Rule of Faith, Univerſal *Tradition*; whither I deſire my Reader to return for ſatisfaction. And which ſtanding firm, the *Proteſtants* Rule of Scripture only muſt needs be as well a ruin'd as ruinous Principle, and fall to nothing. Yet that diſcourſe being more general, I ſhall here deſcend to ſome particulars, to make it viſible to very ordinary Capacities that Scripture doth not contain fully all things neceſſary to Salvation, nor is clearly evident without diſpute in

in all points neceſſary therein contain'd; and conſequently cannot be the ſole and compleat Rule of Faith, wanting thoſe two moſt neceſſary conditions belonging to it.

First, I ſay, not full and comprehending all points neceſſary to Salvation of mankind. For I demand of them whether it be not a fundamental point of Faith to believe the Holy Scriptures to be the Word of God; and yet Mr. *Hooker*, one of the moſt Judicious Writers of the *Engliſh Proteſtants*, acknowledges this cannot be grounded upon Scripture. *Of all points* (ſaith he) *the moſt neceſſary to be believ'd, is that the Scriptures are the Word of God, which is confeſt impoſſible for them to prove.* And proceeding, makes a demonſtration of it againſt the *Puritans*. How then, themſelves being Judges, can the Holy Scriptures being a compleat Rule of Faith, not comprehending what is moſt neceſſary to be believ'd by every Chriſtian?

Hooker's *Eccl. Polit. l.* 2. *as I remember.*

If they ſay this Objection is not pertinent, becauſe whoſoever makes the written word of God the ſole and ſufficient Rule of Faith, muſt neceſſarily pre-ſuppoſe the belief of Scripture founded upon ſome other Principle. I reply, 'tis impertinent to ſay ſo, becauſe the neceſſity of a pre-ſuppoſition of ſome fundamental point is a ſufficient conviction that the Rule they have choſen cannot be compleat and perfect, as they would have it: Eſpecially if it be conſider'd, that the fundamental point pre-ſuppos'd independent on Scripture, but Scripture depending on it, muſt needs be the ground *quoad nos* (to us) of all things believ'd in it. Which ground or antecedent Principle upon which they, as well as we, build their belief of ſuch Scriptures to be the undoubted Word of God being the univerſal *Tradition* and Authority of the Church; not they, but this can only truly and rationally be aſſerted for a compleat and perfect Rule, comprehending all things neceſſary

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to Salvation; handing them down from the Apoſtles themſelves to us now living, as the revealed Truths of Jeſus Chriſt, and believed as ſuch by all reſpective Ages upon that tenure. Among which Truths ſo atteſted, *That ſuch Writings are the undoubted Word of God*, is a Principal one, and believed, becauſe ſo atteſted. But all other Traditionary Doctrines of Faith having the ſame convincing proof that they came from Heaven, whatever of them were occaſionally committed to Writing afterwards by the Apoſtles, are ſtill to be believ'd upon the ſame account, (*viz.*) *Tradition* and *Church Authority*; the certainty of Scripture as well for the Senſe as Letter depending thereon.

Again, I demand of *Engliſh Proteſtants* by what Authority they condemn the *Anabaptiſts* to be *Hereticks*, whether by *Scripture*, or *Tradition*? If they ſay by Scripture, they muſt give me leave to tell, that St. *Auſtin* with the primitive Chriſtians were of another mind, who

tells them very plainly, *That* Con-
L. 4. cont. Donat. ſuetudo Matris Eccleſiæ, *&c. The cuſtom of the Church our Mother in Baptizing Children is in no ſort to be deſpis'd, nor by any means thought ſuperfluous, nor at all to be believ'd, except it was an Apoſtolical Tradition.* But if they value not Antiquity, and preſume the Fathers were but School-Boys to them in the underſtanding of Sacred Writ; let them produce any one Text for *Infant-Baptiſm* ſo clearly proving it, that the Contradictors muſt be unavoidably convinc'd, and left confounded without any ſhadow of reply, before thoroughly knowing and expert Judges in ſuch Controverſies, and will confeſs the Fathers were but dull and heavy men compar'd to their quicker and more deep-ſighted judgements in diving into the ſenſe of Scripture, and reſt ſatisfy'd that upon the ſcore of only Scripture, *Anabaptiſts* may be con-
In his Reply Fiſher. demned for *Hereticks*. I remember Biſhop *Laud* much preſſes that place in the *Acts* to be convincing for

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Infant-Baptiſm, *Repent, and be Baptiz'd every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the promiſe is unto you, and to your Children*; Yet not without the help of *Tradition* enlightning and exalting it to that force and efficacy. But Dr. *Hammond* a great *Scripturiſt* and Defender of the *Proteſtant* Church, confeſſes it is not at all concluding for it. Without more ado, the Truth is, did not *Church-Tradition* ſhining bright in univerſal practice decide the controverſy, they could not ſatisfactorily anſwer thoſe Texts of Scripture wherewith the *Anabaptiſts* confront thoſe other produced by them, nor juſtly enroll them in the black Book of *Hereticks*: Does not this manifeſtly deſtroy their main foundation of Scripture to be the only and ſufficient Rule of Faith?

Act. 2 38, 39.

*In his Anſ. to 6. Quæres.*

Beſides, it is not an *Heretical* practice to Re-baptize thoſe who have been Baptiz'd by *Hereticks*, obſerving the true form of Baptiſm? Can they evince it for ſuch by any

Scripture? St. *Auſtin* tells them, *That cuſtom which was oppoſed to* Cyprian, *is to be believ'd to have taken its riſe from the* Tradition *of the Apoſtles, and that he believ'd it for ſuch.* Moreover, the form of Baptiſm is not expreſly deliver'd in Holy Writ; nor the number of the Sacraments, nor yet the word Sacrament in the Scripture apply'd at all to thoſe they acknowledge for ſuch, at leaſt generally neceſſary to Salvation. But for all theſe we are beholding to the practice and *Tradition* of the Church.

*l.* 2. *de* Bap. *cont.* Donat. *ca.* 7 & *l.* 5. *c.* 23.

This is not all, for farther yet; let them ſhow any precept in Scripture for the Aboliſhing of the *Jewiſh Sabbath*, and obſervation of the *Lords day* in its ſtead. A point doubtleſs neceſſary for *Chriſtians*, however as applyed to multitudes in Church-Communion. Here alſo they are forc'd to leave Scripture, and betake themſelves to *Tradition* for the condemnation of the *Sabbaterians.*

More-

Moreover, would they willingly part with the *Apoſtles Creed*, the Obſervation of *Lent*; which their Biſhop *Andrews* contends to be *Apoſtolical*, and ſee all *Chriſtian Feſtivals* trampled under the prophane Feet of furious *Fanaticks* with moſt inſolent madneſs, as St. *Auſtin* calls it? Yet they are all gone, if Scripture muſt hold them up without *Tradition*. In a word, the greateſt Champions of the *Engliſh Proteſtant* Church, in theſe later years eſpecially, perceiving by ſad experience the *Under-Sectaries*, who were Spawn'd from them, to endanger, and at laſt for a time wholly to deſtroy their new form of Belief and Worſhip by vertue of this Principle of *Only-Scripture*, do now betake themſelves to the Sword and Buckler of *Tradition*, to defend and juſtify themſelves againſt their Treacherous Brethren. And thus, although they fly to our Rule of Faith, *Univerſal Tradition*, for conviction of their Adverſaries in ſome points by themſelves accounted ne-

*In his Sermon upon* Lent.

*Ep.* 118. *ad Janua.*

ceſſary, yet they will needs have the Holy Scriptures to be the only and perfect Rule of Faith. Doubtleſs it had been more ſafe and ingenuous to have acknowledg'd with the Ancient Fathers *Traditionary* Doctrines, as well as the Holy Scriptures, to compleat the Rule of Chriſtian belief; but contradicting Antiquity by contracting the Rule of Faith into Scripture alone, they have likewiſe contradicted themſelves, the inevitable Fate of all Truth-oppoſers.

Secondly, The Holy Scriptures are not clearly evident without diſpute in all points neceſſary contain'd in them; and conſequently no compleat nor certain Rule of themſelves, as the common experience of all Ages makes good. Can any ſay the *Conſubſtantiality* of the Son of God with the Father is in evident or expreſs terms in Sacred Scripture? Yea, or ſo contained in it by inevitable conſequence, as to deſtroy all probability in the Texts brought for the contrary by Contradictors

tradictors? Then certainly the *Arians*, who had as ſubtil Heads and able Brains as any *Proteſtants*, to underſtand the *Logick* of their Adverſaries, were mad men to appeal from *Councils* and *Tradition* to the written Word. They knew very well, that without the *Tradition* and practice of the Church delivering the ſenſe of Scripture, they could handſomly enough evade the force of all Arguments, might be rais'd from the bare and dead words of Scripture, though ſtretch'd upon the Tenters of moſt rigorous Criticiſm. Yea, they doubted not but there were Texts for them more evidently aſſerting the Inferiority of the Son, and appropriating the Divine nature to the Father only; which was the ground of their confidence in appealing to the written Word, to be tryed thereby without *Tradition*. And yet the *Proteſtants* condemn the *Arians* for *Hereticks*, and juſtly too; But how they can do it rationally upon their own Principles, I confeſs ſurpaſſes

my underſtanding, True it is, add to Scripture, the *Tradition* of the Church, and the Authoritative Sentence of an approved General Council ſo interpreting it, and the caſe is clear; but theſe are *Catholick* foundations which they contradict, and therefore no lawful weapons in their hands againſt the *Arians*.

Again, it is no doubt but a Trinity of Perſonsin the Unity of the Godhead, is ſubſtantially or materially contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, but in formal expreſs terms Trinity, and Perſonality or Perſon, are not to be found; nor yet ſo evidently in any Texts, as from them ſatisfactorily to convince the *Antitrinitarians* that the ſame indiviſible Eſſence, is equally and perfectly in three diſtinct Perſons, unleſs we call in Church-Authority and *Tradition* conſtantly ſo explicating thoſe places to our aſſiſtance. For 'tis well known by expert Controvertiſts, that ſuch Texts are confronted by others which ſeem to contradict them;

with

with an appearance plauſible enough to vulgar underſtandings; yea, and which are ſometimes ſo perplex'd and intricate as to vex the moſt Learned for a ſatisfactory Solution. And even might ſhake the Faith of many good Chriſtians, had they not *Univerſal Tradition*, and the Infallibility of the Church for a more ſure retreat to retire to, and ſecurely relie upon after the diſquieting ſtorms of Diſputation. And this is a manifeſt and undenyable Argument, that thoſe who forſake theſe Principles to ground themſelves on Scripture only for all points neceſſary to Salvation, have always made Shipwrack of Faith, and run into *Hereſies*. A thing as manifeſt in *Proteſtants* as in any *Separatiſts* from the Church in former Ages. And this Gangreen, bred out of this corrupt Principle, hath eat ſo far into the very heart and bowels of Religion, that in proceſs of time ſcarce any Article of our *Creed* but hath been called in queſtion by ſuch *Scripturiſts*; and now by too many

are

are contradicted. And so will continue till the Church be restored to her right, and Authoritative Power to interpret the written Word, and determine all Controversies in matters of Religion. For while Scripture is the only Rule left to every ones Fancy there's no redress, and therefore doubtless when writ, never intended for such by the Apostles.

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## Sect. V.

### *That the* Scripture *is not, nor can be a Judge to determine Controversies in* Religion.

IT being clear, that the Sacred Scriptures are not the sole and sufficient Rule of Faith; much less can they be a Judge to pass a definitive Sentence for the final decision of points controverted among *Chri-*

*Chriſtians.* For the proper Office of a Supreme Judge being to end Controverſies ariſing among Members of the ſame Community, by a perſpicuous and evident Sentence, which cannot be miſtaken by the Parties litigant ſo as yet to proceed in their former contention; 'tis as manifeſt as the Sun, that Scripture cannot perform this efficaciouſly, when there are irreconcilable differences, eternal jarrs, and moſt inveterate enmities about fundamental points, among thoſe who appeal to only Scripture for their tryal. Neither is it poſſible there ſhould be any better agreement about ſupernatural Truths, ſo ſublime and myſterious as to tranſcend our comprehenſion and capacity, where contending Parties left to their own liberty with prejudicate Opinions paſſionately favouring their oppoſite Intereſts, make nothing but dead words a judging law according to their own Interpretations.

But in what concerns our preſent debate this impoſſibility will be

be much augmented, if it be considered that the Holy Scriptures speak nothing at all of some necessary things, nor positively and clearly of many other, about which Controversies are risen since their writing, and reception by the Church: Neither are there cases wanting in which they are in no sort capable to give a definitive Sentence for their decision. For seeing there is a Controversy between *Protestants* and us in a main fundamental point about what Books are to be receiv'd for Canonical, and believ'd for the undoubted Word of God; can Scripture it self judge this? It is confess'd impossible, and they appeal to *Canon* and *Tradition*, of the *Jews* to judge and give Sentence in this quarrel. Wonderful! A *Jewish Tradition* founded on the agreement of one particular People, shall be of sufficient Authority to justify them against us; but the voice of the *Catholick* Church grounded on the consent of all Tongues and Nations dispers'd over the whole World,

World, or represented in a lawful General Council, is nothing for us against them in any Controversy. Is not this strange? However let them say what they will, we rest satisfied with the Authority of the *Catholick* Church, believing for * *Canonical* what she receives, and accounting for *Apocryphal* what she rejects; which is built upon better promises than the *Jewish Synagogue*; and so guided by the Spirit of Truth in all matters of Faith, that the Gates of Hell shall ne'r prevail against her.

* Innocentius primus Ep. ad Exuperium. *cap.* 7. Conci. Carthag. 3. *S. August* de Doctr. Christiana, *l. c.* 8.

*In Decretis Gelasii* Papa *prope finem Concil.* Florentinum. *Conc.* Trident. *Sess.* 4. Machabæorum *libros, non* Judæi, *sed* Ecclesia *pro Canonicis habet, S.* Aug. *l.* 18. *de Civ. Dei ca.* 36. Hebræi *non recipiunt libros* Tobæ, Judith & Machabæorum, *Ecclesia tamen, eosdem inter Canonicas Scripturas enumerat. Sapientia &* Ecclesiasticus *parem cum reliquis Canonicis libris tenere noscuntur Authoritatem.* Isidor. *in proemio de Libris* Vet. Testamenti & Novi.

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And having mention'd the *Jews*, we ſhall from Gods inſtitution for the deciſion of all Controverſies about matters of Religious Worſhip during that *Pedagogy*, borrow an Argument againſt *Proteſtants*, in my poor judgment altogether unanſwerable. For though all Ceremonial Rites and Obſervances about Religion were expreſly ordain'd by God himſelf, and ſo particularly and minutely committed to writing by his Servant *Moſes* for the inſtruction and direction of that people in all things relating to God and his Worſhip: Nevertheleſs when any difficulty or doubt aroſe, the written Word was not to decide the queſtion as a Judge, but the Sentence to be given by the High-prieſt; and obedience thereunto required under pain of death: How comes it to paſs, that under the Law of *Jeſus Chriſt* not committed in that exact manner to writing, yet in things relating to God and his Worſhip, Scripture it ſelf ſhould be the only Judge of Controverſies, and thoſe to

Deut. 17. 8, &c. Paralip. 19. 8, 9, 10, &c.

to whom Chriſt hath committed the Government of his Church, ſhould not have one Authoritative word to ſay for their final deciſion? Is this rational? Alas, poor Chriſtian Church whoſe Glory is out-ſhin'd by legal ſhadows! For with them *Sarah* the Miſtreſs hath leſs power then her Hand-maid *Agar.*

Again, when the contention is concerning the ſenſe of Scripture in any fundamental point deliver'd, but obſcurely, it is poſſible for the written Word to give a clear Sentence and determine the Controverſy about it ſelf: For then it would be both obſcure and clear in the ſame matter, and in the ſelf ſame reſpect, at the ſame time, flat contradiction.

If they ſay there's no fundamental point but is evidently contain'd in Sacred Writ, the contrary hath been manifeſted in the precedent *Section.* And for further confirmation; I here ask, whether, *Hoc eſt Corpus meum, Hic eſt Sanguis meus*; be not plain words without any

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Ambiguity in their *Grammatical* conſtruction? We *Catholicks* indeed taught by the univerſal *Tradition* and practice of the Church, doubt not of the Senſe of them: But can *Lutherans*, *Calviniſts*, and *Engliſh Proteſtants* maintain their meaning to be clear and perſpicuous, among whom above fourty ſeveral Interpretations, ſome flatly repugnant to each other are found about them? Can ſuch variety and contrariety proceed but from obſcurity? Either from that, or elſe ſome of them muſt wilfully contradict Scripture, and reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt by maintaining a dangerous Doctrine againſt their own knowledge and Conſcience. But who thoſe are, I leave them to wrangle, upon their own grounds eternally, among themſelves. In the interim, I'm ſure upon *Catholick* Principles, they all ſtand unanſwerably convicted of wilfull *Hereſie*.

Beſides, *Chriſt's real deſcent into Hell*, is an Article of Faith, yet the *Calviniſts* deny it, againſt Scripture

ture, *Acts* 2. *v.* 27, and 31. as plain in our judgment (and ſo think the *Engliſh Proteſtants* alſo,) as the *Apoſtles Creed.* They bring no other Scripture for their Negative, but flatly deny this place to be evident and concluding. Now what muſt be done to end this Controverſy in a fundamental point? The cleareſt Text Scripture affords is already produced to give them ſatisfaction; 'tis unſucceſsful, and they raiſe clouds of new invented Interpretations to hide it from their own and others eyes. Can Scripture now judge, and conclude this Controverſy? Acts 2.27, 31.

Moreover, the *Lutherans* and *Engliſh Proteſtants* agree with *Catholicks* in aſſerting the neceſſity of Baptiſm to Salvation, grounding themſelves on that of St. *John*, *Except a man be born of water and the Spirit; he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* The *Calviniſts* hold the contrary, and by no means will allow *Water* there mention'd to be taken literally for natural *Water*, but Joh. 3. 5.

drink it all up with a dry *Metaphor*. How can they convince them if Scripture alone be judge? If with us they urge them with the consent of Fathers, Universal *Tradition*, and practice of the Church so interpreting these words of our Blessed Saviour, the Controversy is at an end. Or if *Calvinists* will be yet contending, they can speak nothing Solid or Rational in their own defence.

To all which may be added that judicious and accute Observation of an able Controvertist, *That though one intent and end of writing St.* John's *Gospel, was to show the Godhead of Christ, which the* Arians *afterwards denyed, yet the design prov'd so unsuccessful, that never any* Heresie *was more powerful and spreading than that which oppos'd the Truth intended by his Book.* So he; yea, and it is most certain the *Arians* at this day do make more use of that Gospel than any other part of Scripture to beat down the Divinity of the Son of God. A manifest argument that Scripture was never intended by

*Apology for* Tradit. *p.* 137.

by the Author of those Sacred Oracles for the final decision of controverted points, but for something else proper and agreeable to the nature of dead writings. However, we make no question but all *Catholick* Doctrines are contain'd in the *Bible* by Rational deductions, with infinite advantage above what our Adversaries can produce for their defence upon the same grounds, as hath been made to appear by able Controvertists before any Impartial and understanding Judges. More need not be said in a matter condemned by the common sense and experience of the whole World.

## SECT. VI.

### *That private Reaſon in Controverſies of* Faith *is not the Interpreter and Judge of the true Senſe of* Scripture, *for every Chriſtian to rely upon for his Salvation.*

SOme *Engliſh Proteſtants* of Critical Heads, to qualifie the abſurdance of the former *Theſis*, ſtill holding cloſe to the written Word for a compleatly ſufficient Rule of Faith, make private Reaſon the Interpreter and Judge for every Chriſtian. A Principle, which though it may ſeem plauſible and gain followers, becauſe it makes every one *Sui juris*, independent and his own Maſter, a thing ſo deſirable and ſweet to fleſh and blood; yet no leſs than the other, doth it contradict the whole Chriſtian World, always teachig,

teaching, *Ut Scripturas ipſas, ſic Scripturarum ſenſum, pure & imperturbate ſolum ad nos Traditionis alneo deferri*, That the pure and uncorrupted ſenſe of the Scripture doth depend upon *Tradition* as well as the Scriptures themſelves: And accounting it a giddy Spirit of *Heretical* raſhneſs. *Scripturæ interpretationem ex proprio ingenio petere*; To refuſe to give ear to the voice of the Church, and give ear to the Whiſperings of private Reaſon; which is ſo exterminating a Principle, and deſtructive of Religion, that it doth not ruine this, or that, or ſome few *Catholick* Truths, but like a general deluge with an irreſiſtable torrent ſweeps away the Church it ſelf, by overthrowing the unity in Faith, the Life, and Soul, and Eſſence of it.

'Tis a ſubject would afford a large field of Diſcourſe, but I ſhall content my ſelf with brevity, and I hope others alſo. Whoſoever ſhall deſire more ample ſatisfaction, I refer him to the *Exomologeſis* of Mr.

*Creſſy*, where 'tis ſolidly confuted in anſwer to Mr. *Chillingworth*, the great Patron and firſt publick Aſſertor of it with approbation.

The principal Arguments which convinc'd me, (for I was one of thoſe very unreaſonable *Rationaliſts* when I was a *Proteſtant*) and with which I reſt fully ſatisfied, are theſe following.

First, if private reaſon be the only Interpreter and Judge of Scripture for every Chriſtian, I deſire thoſe who are minded, to give a ſatisfactory Anſwer to thoſe places of Sacred Writ; which in my poor judgement cannot ſtand with their poſition. St. *Peter* teacheth us, 2 Per. 1. 19, 20, &c. *That no Prophecy of the Scripture is of private Interpretation, but Holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.* That is, as the Sacred Penmen of Gods Word writ by Inſpiration of the Holy-Ghoſt, being his publick Inſtruments to reveal the Divine Verities to the World; ſo thoſe Sacred Oracles are not to be interpreted Authora-

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tive by the private Reaſon and Will of men; but their true ſenſe and meaning, (if call'd in queſtion,) is to be received from the Governours of the Church, whom God has authoriz'd to declare his will unto his People. Of which he gives a convincing reaſon in his 3*d.Chap.* telling us, *That in his dear Brother* Paul's *Epiſtles, are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable, wreſt, as they do alſo the other Scriptures, unto their own deſtruction.* This is not compatible to the definitive Sentence of a Judge in any Controverſy, which muſt be ſo clear and perſpicuous, that the moſt unlearned or refractory cannot doubt or miſtake after pronunciation. Neither is this difficulty in matters of no moment; but in points neceſſary, where Souls do periſh through misbelief.

*Concilium Trid.* Sef 4.

2 Pet. 3. 15, 16, 17.

We find in the Acts of the Apoſtles, that *Philip* the Deacon drawing near to the Chariot of the devout *Eunuch*, and hearing him read the Prophet *Iſaias*, ſaid, *Underſtandeſt*

Act 8. 30, 31, &c.

*ſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt? And he ſaid, how can I except ſome man guide me?* He had not learn'd the Principle of their *Rationaliſts* to bid the Holy man ſpare his pains of Expoſition; or if he would be doing, that he was not bound to believe one word he ſpoke for Truth 'till his own reaſon made it Authentick: For this wild Doctrine frees every man in matters of Eternity from all Authority of humane Teachers though of Divine Inſtitution; ſo that be we *Jews*, or *Heathens*, or in what Church ſoever we have been Baptiz'd, we muſt ſtand to no *Creed*, believe no *Catechiſm* or abridgement of points neceſſary, though confirm'd by the practice of the whole *Chriſtian* World, rely on no *Inſtructors*, but believe and practice the quite contrary, if our private reaſon judges it to be contain'd in Sacred Scripture. Doubtleſs if his judgment had been prepoſeſs'd with this proud, arrogant Principle, *Philip* had preach'd in vain, nor had he believ'd unto Salvation, but would

would have diſmiſs'd the *Evangeliſt* with ſome ſuch words as theſe: I have a deſire to ſave my Soul, and therefore have given you a hearing; but all this is nothing yet to me, I will ſearch the Scriptures farther to ſee what I muſt believe; and when I have made my *Creed*, I will ſend for You to Baptize me. Which plainly contradicts the method of ſaving inſtruction deliver'd by the great Doctor of the *Gentiles* in that famous *Climax*; *How ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believ'd? And how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how ſhall they hear without a Preacher?* A Preacher with Miſſion and Commiſſion from Jeſus Chriſt: But no place is more convincing than that to *Timothy*, *The Church is the Pillar and ground of Truth.* And if the Church, how then muſt every one build upon his private Reaſon, for the true ſenſe of Scripture in all things neceſſary to Salvation? St. *Paul* was an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt; whoſe Miſſioners then are thoſe who teach the contrary? Laſt-

Rom. 10. 14, 15.

1 Tim. 3. 15.

Laſtly, I deſire them to reconcile this Article of our Ancient *Creed*, *I believe the Holy Catholick Church*, with their novel Doctrine, *The Catholick Church hath nothing to do with my Faith, I believe my own Reaſon, and nothing elſe; in giving the true ſenſe of Scripture to me.* For my part, it being clear to me from the written Word, that the Church hath a promiſe of Infallibility in matters of Faith, That there is a command from Chriſt laid upon every one to hear her voice under pain of damnation, and that otherwiſe the above named Article would not have been inſerted into the *Apoſtles Creed* as a fundamental point, I could ſee no ſafety or certainty in matters of eternal Intereſt, but by wholly renouncing my moſt weak, deceitful ſelf, and delivering up my ſelf entirely into the hands of the *Catholick* Church, to be taught by her what I muſt Believe and Do to be ſaved: Nor found I any thing more reaſonable then to captivate my underſtanding to the obedience of

of Faith, when the God of reaſon doth require it at our hands.

Secondly, to make every one an Interpreter and Judge of the true ſenſe of Holy Scripture for himſelf unappealably by Reaſon, ſeems evidently to me to deprive us of the only rational and ſolid means which is required to produce a well grounded Faith of Supernatural Verities in the Soul of man. Which thus I manifeſt.

Supernatural Faith being an aſſent of the underſtanding to things revealed, meerly for the Authority of the Relator, without any farther diſpute when once we have an aſſurance that God hath revealed them; two things muſt neceſſarily concurre in all mediate productions to beget this act firmly and rationally in any Soul; namely, *1ſt.* Divine Revelation of things to be believ'd, which is the formal Object of Faith, into which it is ultimately reſolv'd; And *2dly.* A certain knowledge or moral evidence that ſuch are revealed, by the mediation

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or intervention of which the understanding elevated by Grace proceeds to the foresaid assent. Now suppose there were no Objects of Supernatural and Divine Faith but what are contain'd in the written Word, 'tis not the bare and naked Letter, but Scripture rightly understood, that is the Word of God and of Infallible verity; except therefore we have some *Medium*, or means to convey assuredly to our understanding the true sense of Scripture, our Faith cannot but halt and totter, when we cannot rationally afford a firm assent to such a thing as revealed, and have just cause to suspect whither we rightly understand that Scripture which contains the Revelation. And certainly this cause of suspition will be ever just while private reason is the Interpreter and Judge of Holy Writ, when abundant experience tells us nothing is more Fallible; nothing more deceitful, nothing sooner bribed with pride, or passion, or prejudice, or education, or interest; to make words speak what never

never the Author intended by them. Insomuch that hardly any fundamental point delivered in Scripture, but hath been called in question, and still is by too many, protesting withall their sincerity and endeavours to attain to the true sense of Scripture by the light of their own Reason, to which they appeal as their Judge and Protector in those wilful and irrational proceedings. Neither indeed have *Heresies* arose in the Church but from Scripture misinterpreted by private reason, as the * Fathers and Church-history sufficiently testify. *Alas poor Souls that have such a guide to carry the Light which must direct them to eternal Happiness. If they make their Light Darkness, how great is that Darkness? When their guide misleads them, what remedy is there left to recall them into the path which leads to Heaven?*

* Non aliunde natæ sunt hæredes, nisi quod Scripturæ bene intelliguntur non benè Sr. *Aug.* Tract 18 in *Joab.* Et de Gen. ad Lit. l. 7 ca. 9. Non ob aliud sunt hæretici nisi quod Scripturas non recte intelligentes suas Falsas opiniones contra earum veritatem pertinaciter asserunt & alii passim, S. *Ambr.* in Titi. *Vincentius Lyrin.* ca. 36. S. *Irenæus* l. 1. c. 1. S. *Hier.* ad ca. 23. *Isaiæ.* S. *Hilar.* in lib. ad *Constantium.* Origenes *Hom.* 31. in *Exodum*, &c.

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The *Catholick* Church indeed is inriched with ſo great a priviledge by Chriſt our Saviour, that ſhe cannot err in things neceſſary to Salvation (as hath been manifeſted in the precedent *Motive* by *Reaſon*, *Fathers*, *Councils*, *Scripture*, *Tradition* and practice of the *Chriſtian* World.) Whom we may as undoubtedly believe in delivering to us the true ſenſe of Scripture as the Letter; and upon whom relying we have only a firm and rational belief of revealed Verities, conſtant and immoveable among all the changes of *Sects* and *Hereticks*.

True it is, in every act of Faith there is uſe of Reaſon, whether it be referred to the Authority of God revealing, or the Church propoſing. For we captivate our underſtanding to the obedience of Faith, becauſe we judge nothing more reaſonable than to believe God; and we ſecurely rely upon his Church whom he hath promis'd to aſſiſt with Infallibility in ſuch propoſals. But ſhall we ſay therefore

fore that Reaſon is the prime intrinſical Motive of Faith, and into which it finally is reſolv'd; Nothing leſs. For this diſcourſe and approbation of Reaſon are but neceſſarily previous and antecedent to our deliberate and rational acts of Faith; the acts themſelves are acts of the underſtanding not diſcourſing, but purely aſſenting. Which aſſent is not for Reaſons ſake, but for Authority. Were the laſt reſolution into the judgment of private Reaſon, Faith could not be Divine or Supernatural. Reaſon indeed produces an act of Faith as well in *Catholicks* as *Proteſtants*, but with a vaſt difference. For a *Proteſtant* believes ſuch a Truth to be from God, relying upon his Reaſon only that it is revealed; and this aſſent is not rational, becauſe his ground is deceitful. But in a *Catholick* Reaſon acts only ſo far in points of belief as to bring him to Authority, declaring ſuch Truths to be ſufficiently revealed by Almighty God, which he cannot with any

any reaſon ſuſpect to be Fallible in ſuch declarations. *I believe this*, ſays a *Proteſtant*, *becauſe my Reaſon tells me it is revealed, and will allow no other judge of this Revelation. I believe this*, ſays a *Catholick*, *becauſe an Infallible Authority aſſures me it is revealed; and my Reaſon tells me there is no other ſufficient ground or evidence for Divine Faith, and therefore give up my private judgment to the Church.* And which of theſe Principles is more ſafe and rational let Reaſon judge.

Thirdly, I demand of theſe *Rationaliſts*, whether there be any ſuch thing as *Hereſy* in the World,
1 Cor. 11. 19. and what it is? *Oportet eſſe Hæreſes*, &c. *There muſt be Hereſies*; St. *Paul* hath ſaid it, and that's ſufficient. And as for what it is, 'tis well known the Church hath always taught, *That* Hereſie *is the voluntary Election of ſome private opinion, contradicting the Doctrine of the Church. And that he is to be accounted an* Heretick *who neglecting the Churches Authority with a ſtubborn mind defends wicked*

*wicked opinions.* But if we ſhould admit their new definition, *That* Hereſie *is to contradict any fundamental point expreſly contain'd in Scripture*; In my poor judgment according to ſuch a definition, there's no ſuch thing as *Hereſie*, or *Hereticks*; but both *Arians*, *Anabaptiſts*, *Fanaticks*, &c. are as good *Catholicks* as any Chriſtians of the World. For if private Reaſon be the only judge of the true Senſe of Scripture for every one to rely upon, theſe, and all other condemned *Hereticks* (the *Montaniſts* excepted) relying upon the written Word, as interpreted by Reaſon, with ſober enquiry and real endeavours to find out Truth, cannot juſtly be ſo reputed. The *Arians* have ſo much Reaſon and Scripture too in the bare Letter on their ſide, that take away the Churches Infallibility and univerſal *Tradition* interpreting and delivering to us the true ſenſe of it, the Controverſy would never be decided. All places would ſwarm with *Neſtorians*, *Eutychians*, *Anti-trini-*

*tarians*, *Barengarians*, *Anabaptiſts*, &c. neither could we condemn them, if this Principle be good, for doing their duty in following Scripture as the Light of their own private Reaſon or Spirit dictates to them.

Let them not ſay, that theſe, and ſuch like are juſtly condemn'd for contradicting expreſs Scripture, againſt their knowledge, and the judgment of their own Reaſon. For they muſt remember; firſt, that themſelves do not condemn the *Anabaptiſts* upon only Scripture grounds, Secondly, that it hath been demonſtrated that all fundamental points are not ſo expreſs in Scripture as they imagine. And thirdly, that 'tis moſt uncharitable to ſay, *That all thoſe whom they condemn for* Hereticks *do againſt their own knowledge and Conſcience contradict the expreſs Word of God, and run headlong to hell with their eyes open.* Can we poſſibly imagine, that among ſo many Millions of *Arians* there was not one ſingle perſon had any Conſcience?

ſcience? It cannot be denyed but that many *Hereticks* have, and do live Vertuouſly in the Eyes of the World: For who knows not, *That Satan ſometimes transforms himſelf into an Angel of Light?* And while they profeſs, and proteſt, that if it was once made apparent to them that their Tenets are againſt the Word of God, they would not one minute perſiſt in them; we judge it uncharitable to affirm, that notwithſtanding the proteſtations of their ſincerity and real (though miſguided) zeal, they all wilfully ſin againſt the Light and knowledge of their Conſciences. We *Catholicks* indeed aſſert, *That ſufficient evidences of credibility are produced by us to convince them of their Heretical opinions and dangerous ſtate without Repentance:* But withall we ſay, *That God in his juſt Judgments, which are inſcrutable, ſuffers them through ſtrong deluſions to believe Lyes, in that the Light of Truth is veiled from their Eyes by paſſion, or prejudice, or worldly Intereſt, while they ſo continue;*

*and we pray for them, in hope that the Father of infinite Mercies will in his good time diſcover Truth unto them, and bring them home unto his Church.* But for theſe *Rationaliſts* to damn all thoſe whom they eſteem *Hereticks*, as contradictors of the Word of God againſt their Conſcience and knowledge, is a cenſure moſt unreaſonable, and little beſeeming ſuch whoſe lives are not ſo Goſpel-like, but that many *Sectaries* who differ from them in fundamentals may juſtly be reputed at leaſt as conſcientious, and in charity cannot be thought otherwiſe. All which duely conſider'd, plainly proves, that they muſt either change their Judge of Controverſy in points of Faith, or give us ſome new Rule, to diſcover *Hereſy*. And withall, that if they will ſtick cloſe to this Principle, they muſt maintain that all the General Councils of the Church, even that celebrated by the Apoſtles themſelves, were meer tyrannical Uſurpations, in obliging all Chriſtians to believe and practice

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according to their Decrees, whatever their private Reaſon could ſay to the contrary.

Fourthly, in vain and to no purpoſe hath Jeſus Chriſt inſtituted Authoritative Overſeers and Governours in his Church, *For the perfecting the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the Edification of the Body of Chriſt, till we all come in the unity of Faith,* &c. If every one muſt acknowledge no viſible Authority upon Earth, to have any obliging power over him in Doctrines appertaining to God, but be his own Teacher in all points of Faith according to the Dictates of private Reaſon. Eph. 4. 11, 12, &c.

Fifthly, If every one be ſent to Scripture to compoſe a *Creed* for himſelf, 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be any unity among the Chriſtians in Faith and Worſhip. That is, 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be any ſuch thing upon earth as one only *Catholick* Church. Of the breach of which unity, endleſs diviſions amongſt thoſe who adhere to this

Principle are apparent and moſt viſible demonſtrations.

Laſtly whoſoever ſeriouſly conſiders the difficulties of Languages, the multiplicity of the occaſions and intentions of the Writers, the various lections in Copies of the Original, the infinite and conſiderable differences in Tranſlations, the equivocation and ambiguity of Words, the variety and obſcurity of Circumſtances, together with the weakneſs of all, and ignorance of moſt men, endeavouring by themſelves from dead Letters to attain to the knowledge of the ſublime myſteries of our Holy Faith, tranſcending all humane underſtanding and comprehenſion, cannot but conclude that 'tis altogether impoſſible, that private Reaſon ſhould be the only Interpreter and Judge of the true Senſe of Scripture, for every one to rely upon for his Salvation; ſeeing nothing can be certainly gather'd and concluded out of naked words conſidered barely in themſelves, involving

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ſo many difficulties and uncertainties, in regard to incomparably the greater part of mankind. And if a *Proteſtant* Preacher will ſpeak out ingeniouſly in this point, he muſt tell his Auditors in theſe, or ſuch like words: *Beloved, we exhort you to ſearch the Scriptures; and whatſoever we ſay is neceſſary to Salvation, to believe us only ſo far as your own Reaſon doth tell you we teach according to the Word of God; for that is the Rule, and private Reaſon the ſole Judge to give an unappealable Sentence in ſuch Caſes. This is our Doctrine, and this is alſo your practice; but truely Beloved, all things rightly conſidered, we muſt needs confeſs that 'tis an unſteady foundation, to build your Faith and Salvation upon; for after this way of proceeding, you are infinitely obnoxious to dangerous errours, and cannot but deceive your ſelves in matters that concern your everlaſting Happineſs.* So he preaching ingenuouſly: Neither indeed can rational ſecurity be had in things of eternal Intereſt; 'till repo-

ſing our ſelves in the boſome of the *Catholick* Church, we take her word as well for the Senſe of Scripture as the Letter. A ground doubtleſs ſufficient for me to juſtify the change of my Religion, and for others to follow me.

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## SECT. VII.

### *An anſwer to ſome of the principal places of* Scripture *upon which* Proteſtants *rely for their Rule and Judge of Faith.*

IT being a main fundamental point of Faith to know what is the Rule and Judge of all the reſt, they who hold the written Word for a compleatly ſufficient Rule and Interpreter of its ſelf, or give private Reaſon the Authority of a Judge in expounding it as ſuch a Rule; muſt neceſſarily ground themſelves upon Scrip-

Scripture for this Article. And ſome, if not moſt, of the principal places are theſe. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there's no light in them,* Iſaiah 8. 20. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they which teſtify of me,* Joh. 5. 39. *Theſe are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life thorough his Name,* Joh. 26. 31. *And* Paul *reaſon'd with them out of the Scriptures. And they ſearch'd the Scripture daily, whether thoſe things were ſo,* Act. 2. 11. *All Scripture divinely inſpir'd is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly inſtructed to every good work,* 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book: And if any man ſhall take away from the words of the Book of this Prophecy, God ſhall take away his*

*part*

*part out of the Book of Life*, Apocal. 22. ver. 18, 19.

To all which, and whatever other Scripture-proofs *Proteſtants* produce for themſelves againſt us; I firſt by way of general reply demand of them, whether they bring ſuch Texts as demonſtrative arguments evidencing their poſition, or only as probable? If only as probable, they conclude nothing againſt us *Catholicks*, who have the judgement and practice of the Univerſal Church, the beſt Interpreter of Holy Scriptures and conveyer of true Senſe, ſtanding on our ſide, with infinite advantage againſt their Novel Expoſitions. But if they produce them as demonſtrations, how comes it about that any doubt of them, ſeeing every demonſtration is ſuch, as that granting the Premiſſes, the concluſion cannot be denyed.

From that of *Iſaias* they urge us thus. *Behold O* Papiſts, *the Prophet of the Lord ſends the* Jews *to the written Word of God as the Rule and Judge of what is taught them.* I

I anſwer, *Doubtleſs they who affirm this, have quite forgot that the High-Prieſt in all doubts of any moment about Divine Worſhip, was conſtituted by God the ſupreme Judge, to give a definitive Sentence under pain of death to the diſobeyers.* And ſo they ſet up the Holy Prophet againſt *Moſes*, and make one Scripture, as they Interpret it, contradict another. Deut. 17. 8, 9, &c.

This plainly ſhews they abuſe the Text, whoſe genuine Senſe will eaſily appear by light borrowed from the Context. *Iſaias* propheſied in troubleſome times; and the *Jews* were very ſollicitous what the event would be; and neglecting to enquire of God, had no recourſe to the Law and the Prophets, but ſought unto them who had familiar Spirits, and unto Wizards. The Prophet grieved at this Vengeance provoking ſin, ſends them to the Law and to the Teſtimony, where this grand impiety was forbidden; and withall puts them in mind of their great folly in ſeeking to ſuch who had no Divine Light for the 1 Sam. 28. 6. Levit. 20. 6 27. Deut. 18. 9, 10, &c.

Reve-

Revelation of future contingences, which could not poſſibly be in them who undertook it againſt Gods Word. Now in the name of wonder what is this to a Judge of Controverſies in points of Faith? It is not lawful to conſult the Devil to know future events, becauſe he is a Lyar, and it is a thing forbidden in the written Word; therefore the Scripture is the only Rule and Judge of Controverſies in points of Faith and Worſhip among Chriſtians. 'Twere well ſuch Diſputants would learn to be *Logicians*, before they turn'd Controverſial Divines.

To the ſecond, *Search the Scriptures*, &c. I find ſo ſatisfactory an Anſwer in *Becanus*, that I ſhall do little more than tranſlate his words. *Our Bleſſed Saviour in this Chapter is diſputing with the unbelieving* Jews *who denyed him to be the Son of God, or ſent from him*; To convince them he makes uſe of four Topicks. Firſt, *The witneſs of* John *the Baptiſt, whom they accounted a Prophet, and had formerly told them pointing to our*

*Summa Theolo. par. c. 7.*

Joh. 5. 39.

*our Bleſſed Saviour*, Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the ſins of the World. I bear record that this is the Son of God. Secondly, *The Teſtimony of his Divine works, and ſtupendious miracles in theſe words*, I have a greater witneſs than that of *John*, for the works which the Father hath ſent me to finiſh, the ſame works that I do, bear witneſs of me that the Father hath ſent me. Thirdly, *The Teſtimony of God the Father in the Verſe following:* And the Father himſelf who hath ſent me hath born witneſs of me. *And that by an audible voice from Heaven at his Baptiſm in theſe words*, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed: *As alſo at his Transfiguration, where the ſame words were ſpoken with this addition*, Hear ye Him. *Which firſt voice, if none of the* Jews *there preſent heard, (as certainly they did not, unleſs in the words following,* Neither have ye heard his voice; *hearing is to be taken for obeying) yet to them the Teſtimony was Authentick,*

Joh. 1. 29. 34.

Joh. 5. 36.

v. 37.

Mat. 3. 17.

Mat. 17. 5.

Joh. 5. 37.

*thentick, who seeing his most Holy Life and many Miracles to attest his Mission could not rationally think he would deceive them with a Lye.*

*Now more they could not desire, when the force of these invincible arguments or nothing could dint and mollify their rocky hearts to receive the impression of saving Faith. However, our Blessed Saviour to give them all possible satisfaction, makes use of a fourth Topick from the Holy Scriptures,* ver. 39. *which he bids them search,* For in them, *saith he,* ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they which testify of me. *Which Paraphras'd is thus much. If ye will not receive the three former Testimonies, which are most proper and efficacious to work Faith in your hearts, but shut your eyes against Light sufficient to turn the darkness of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *into day; yet the Scriptures, which ye receive and acknowledge, bear such witness of me, that if ye did search into them with humble hearts, ye could not but be convinc'd of the Truth I preach unto you. In them indeed ye think*

*think ye have eternal Life, but while malice and pride thus blind your eyes, ye deceive your ſelves, and make them a killing Letter to your Souls.*

Now let who will apply it, the Argument runs thus, Our Bleſſed Saviour having made uſe of the moſt powerful means to convince the *Jews* of their Infidelity, and they yet perſiſting in their Blaſphemies, at laſt for their greater confuſion made uſe of an argument from Scripture which they received, *Therefore Scripture is the ſole Judge of Controverſies about Religion.* How this follows I underſtand not, when our Bleſſed Saviour in the preſent conteſt, ſends them not only to the written Word, but uſes it as the laſt, and perhaps leaſt evidence of his Divinity and Miſſion.

It clearly makes indeed for us *Catholicks*, who as our Bleſſed Saviour brought St. *Johns* Teſtimony againſt his Advetſaries, ſo do we likewiſe againſt the *Proteſtants* produce the Ancient Fathers, Martyrs and Confeſſors of all Ages to witneſs

neſs for us in the preſent Controverſies; as alſo the voice of God from Heaven by many Miracles ſpeaking in defence of the Truths which we profeſs. They in this like to obdurate *Jews* deſpiſe theſe unanſwerable evidences, which are Motives ſufficient to work on Infidels, and will admit no Rule nor Judge but the Holy Scriptures to decide the quarrel. Thinking, as the *Jews* did, to have Eternal Life in them, but with that incredulous people likewiſe deceive themſelves, do obſerve the Light of Divine Truth, by drawing as it were a vail of private and perverſe Interpretations over their Eyes, to their eternal Perdition.

I add moreover, that had our Bleſſed Saviour only appealed to the Propheſies of the *Old Teſtament* concerning himſelf, as ſufficient to convince the *Jews* that he was the true *Meſſias*, ſo that nothing elſe was neceſſary or requiſite for the clearing of that point; yet I ſee not how this concluſion will follow, there-

therefore all neceſſary points of Faith are ſo fully and plainly deliver'd to writing in the *New Teſtament* under the Law of Grace, that there's no other Rule nor Judge to know and determine how many, and what they are, when controverted among Chriſtians. Yet this muſt follow, or this Text doth them no good for the end they uſe it, as moſt certainly it does not.

Which anſwer likewiſe takes away all ſtrength from that place in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, where the *Bereans* are commended for ſearching the Scriptures, whether thoſe things were ſo as St. *Paul* taught, and they believed before they conſulted the written Word, upon the Authority of their Teacher, confirming his Doctrine to be the Word of God by frequent Miracles. Upon inquiry indeed it could not but be much ſatisfaction to them to find ſo much of the Light of the Goſpels involv'd in the Shadows of the Law; and the Predictions of the Prophets to be ſo exactly fulfill'd in the per-

ſon of Chriſt; and about theſe it was that St. *Paul* diſputed out of Scripture, and for which they ſearch'd after their believing, and and ſo comes not home to the queſtion. For that the whole Law of Chriſt or all *Catholick* Doctrines neceſſary to Salvation are plainly contain'd, and may ſatisfactorily be prov'd from *Moſes* and the Prophets I preſume our Adverſaries will not maintain, and ſo their Argument from hence is at an end.

To that in the 20*th.* of St. *John* I anſwer, that the true ſenſe and meaning of thoſe words is this: That St. *John* teſtifies to the World he hath written a Book of the Life and Death of our Bleſſed Saviour, when the Miracles wrought by him, and therein deliver'd, did ſufficiently evidence him to be the Son of God and the true *Meſſias* according to his Doctrine, without belief in whoſe Name they could not be ſaved. And not that all neceſſary points of Faith were ſo deliver'd in this Goſpel, as to be intended by him for a compleat

pleat Rule of Belief, and Judge of all Controverſies in Fundamentalls to the Chriſtian World. Neither can any rational man, except blinded with Paſſion, or bribed with Intereſt, but perceive this latter Expoſition to be forced, and the other natural. To believe in Chriſt as the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, is a fundamental of fundamentals, without which Salvation is not to be had; But to believe this only is not ſufficient, nor can be the ſcope of this Text; when 'tis certain many neceſſary points of Chriſtian belief are not contain'd in this *Evangeliſt*. Who, as 'tis uſual with other Sacred Pen-men of Gods Word, aſcribes the vertue of that effect to ſome principal or ſpecial cauſes, though but partial, which proceeds alſo from other by a neceſſary concatenation or connexion, to make up the whole and adequate cauſe of ſuch a product: We are ſaid in Scripture *to be ſaved by Hope*; is it therefore of it ſelf ſufficient for Salvation? Is therefore Faith ex- Rom. 8. 24.

Heb. 11. 6. cluded? No doubtleſs, *For without Faith 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God.* Or becauſe, *The Juſt ſhall live by* Rom. 1. 17. *Faith*, are not good works neceſſary? What means then St. *Paul* to tell us, *That though we have all Faith* 1 Cor 13. 1, 2, &c. *without Charity it profiteth us nothing?* He alſo teaches us, *That whoſoever* Rom. 10. 9 &c. *calls on the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved*; Is it therefore enough of it ſelf to bring a man to Heaven? The Truth is, Prayer ſaves us, good Works ſave us, Faith ſaves us, Hope ſaves us; and therefore properly enough they are ſaid to do it ſeverally, though only conjointly they are ſufficient: And when St. *John* tells us, *He writ the Life and Death of Jeſus Chriſt, that thorough Faith in his Name we might be ſaved*; He little dream'd that in after Ages a Generation of men would ariſe that ſhould affirm he taught; *That his Goſpel did compriſe in particular all fundamental points of Faith ſufficient for the Salvation of mankind.*

To that in *Timothy* I anſwer, Firſt, 'tis evident by the Context that

that the Holy Scriptures of the *Old Teſtament*, being ſuch as *Timothy* had learn'd from his Childhood, (when little, if any, of the *New* could be written and divulg'd) out of which I am confident our Adverſaries will not pretend to determine all points of *Catholick* Doctrine acknowledg'd by themſelves neceſſary to Salvation; which quite overthrows their Argument from this place.

Secondly, ſuppoſe we ſhould grant it to be underſtood of the Scriptures of the *New Covenant*; yet it will not follow from hence that therefore they are a compleat and perfect Rule of Faith, whereby to judge all Doctrines whether they be revealed verities, or not; when from the 14*th. Verſe* 'tis clear to any underſtanding eye, that St. *Paul* exhorts *Timothy to hold conſtant to the Faith*, received principally upon the tenure of *Tradition*: Which is our *Catholick* Rule, and to which we muſt ſtick cloſe, as he elſewhere teaches us, *Though an Angel from Heaven ſhould preach the contra-* Gal. 1.

ry. This *Timothy* was to do, this *Traditionary Depoſitum* he was to keep, whether ne had been ver'd or no in the *Old Scriptures*, or any *New* written and depoſited in the Church. Yet withall, he puts in mind of a peculiar advantage to confirm his Faith received by *Oral Tradition*, *And make him a perfect man of God or Biſhop throughly furniſh'd unto all good works proper to his Paſtoral Office, in that from his Infancy he had been brought up in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make men wiſe unto Salvation through Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and are profitable for Teaching, for Arguing, for Reproving, for Inſtructing in Righteouſneſs the Flock committed to his Charge.* And thus indeed it makes againſt themſelves, and for us highly, who makes uſe of Scripture for a Rule of Faith as regulated and expounded by *Tradition*. But to force the words to ſpeak what they would prove from hence, cannot be without manifeſt abſurdity and contradiction. As if

the

the Apoſtle ſhould ſay; Timothy, *continue thou in the things which thou haſt learned and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them: And yet do not truſt* Oral Tradition, *though from the mouth of an Apoſtle, but the* Scriptures *only for your* Religion.

Thirdly, weigh well the words themſelves in the ballance of right Reaſon, and they will eaſily be found too light to carry the cauſe on their ſide. *All Scripture divinely inſpired, is profitable for teaching, for arguing, for reproving, for inſtructing in Righteouſneſs,* &c. True, 'tis ſo, taken collectively; yea, diſtributively every verſe of Scripture is profitable for ſome ſuch end and purpoſe as is here ſpecified. And what then? Therefore it is ſufficient to regulate our Faith in all points neceſſary to Salvation, and to determine all Controverſies in Religion. Good God! As if what is profitable for our Salvation muſt preſently be ſufficient for all things required to it. Speak ingenuouſly,

is there such a word as sufficient, or compleat Rule of Faith, or sole Judge of Controversies, or words equivalent contained in this Text? Or doth St. *Paul* say that Scripture is all-sufficient of it self to perform these Offices without the Churches Interpretation? Because 'tis profitable in the hand of a Learned Bishop to Teach, to Dispute, to Correct, to Instruct the Souls for whom he must give an account to God; Is it therefore a sufficient Rule for every learner and ignorant Christian to square and cut out his own Faith by, to interpret and judge of according to his own private Reason, and to compose himself a *Creed*, though contrary to Fathers, Councils, and the whole Christian World? Does St. *Paul* say this? Will this Text justify such an inference? Yet this he must say, or this place concludes nothing against *Catholicks*.

To the last out of the *Apocalypse*, and not the least they rely upon in this Controversy; I shall give a brief

brief anſwer, as ſeeming to me of all other moſt impertinent and non-concluding. For the true meaning thereof is plainly this: *Whoſoever ſhall preſume to add to theſe Divine Revelations any other than what I have already deſcribed in this Book, and endeavour to obtrude them upon the Church with the ſtamp of my Authority to gain credit to them; or ſhall deny any Propheſies herein contain'd to be written by me; let ſuch a wretch expect the Vials of Gods Vengeance to be pour'd on his accurſed head, for ſo wicked an Impoſture and Infidelity.* Which being evident, thus muſt run their Argument: *God will ſeverely puniſh thoſe who ſhall add deceitfully, or ſubſtract maliciouſly from St.* John's *Propheſies; therefore the* Bible's *a compleat Rule of Faith, and the ſole Judge of Controverſies about Religion.* An inference too groſs to be confuted. Yet from particular premiſes they draw an univerſal concluſion; and on ſuch weak and abſurd reaſonings from Scripture build their Church.

But

But how *Engliſh Proteſtants* will defend their Brethren the *Lutherans* from the wrath of God, I ſay not for diminiſhing, but even taking away this whole Book of St. *John's Revelations* from Sacred Canon, I know not. Thus therefore it appears, there is nothing here produced by our Adverſaries that proves evidently the all-ſufficiency of Scripture for a Rule and Judge to decide all Controverſies in Religion; that the above-cited Texts but being throughly examin'd, either conclude not for them, or for us. So much we are beholding to our Antagoniſts.

To conclude, after an impartial and full examination to the beſt of my Abilities, I finding the foundation of *Proteſtaniſm* to be really groundleſs, and built upon meer uncertainties, I forſook it, and my own ſelf, to rely on the *Catholick* Church for my Salvation. I renounced my own deceitful and weak reaſonings upon Scripture, to believe what the Fathers have plainly

plainly and unanimously taught, what hath been declared in approved Oeneral Councils, and what hath been delivered by *Universal Tradition* from the Apostles to us for the Infallible and undoubted Word of God.

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THE

# *The third Motive.*

That the Protestant Church of *England* is involv'd in the guilt of *Schism* and *Heresie*, which crimes are inconsistent with Salvation.

## Sect. I.

### *The nature of* Schism *and* Heresie *declared from* Scripture *and the ancient* Fathers.

TO make good this Motive of my Conversion, my first task shall be to lay open the nature of *Heresie* and *Schism* from Sacred Scripture, and the ancient Fathers of the Church.

Secondly,

Secondly, I ſhall make it appear, that the *Engliſh* Church is highly guilty of thoſe ſins, by its ſeperation from the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the *Roman* Church its *Catholick* Mother.

Thirdly, I ſhall diſcover the weakneſs and inſufficiency of thoſe Allegations which are commonly produced to maintain the *Proteſtants* Separation to be lawful.

The Church of Chriſt is the higheſt Tribunal on earth, a Judicature of Eternal life and death, from whoſe living voice we receive our Faith, and the grounds of it, as is ſaid and proved before. Whom whoſoever will not hear in her definitive Sentence in Spiritual matters, *Is to be accounted as a Heathen or a Publican*, by the judgment and determination of our Bleſſed Saviour. Hence ariſes an indiſpenſable neceſſity to Believe as the Church Believes, Explicitly or Implicitly; ſo that the Faith of the *Cardinal* and *Collier* (there being no difference in men as Believers, but all equally

Mat. 18. 18.

equally ignorant as ſuch) muſt be the ſame, as to the ſubſtance, under pain of damnation. And as to ſeperate from her life-giving Communion is formal *Schiſm*, ſo to recede from her Doctrine in points of Faith with obſtinacy, is flat *Hereſie*.

Let therefore *Schiſmaticks* never ſo much pretend Sanctity, or *Hereticks* Truth, from hence they may eaſily be diſcover'd to be thoſe falſe Prophets whom our Bleſſed Saviour
Mat. 7. 15. forewarns us of, *coming to us in ſheeps-clothing, but inwardly are ravenous Wolves:* To be thoſe whom St. *Paul* deſcribes to his Auditors, telling them, *Among your ſelves ſhall*
Act. 20. 29, 30. *be men ſpeaking perverſe things to draw away Diſciples after them, not ſparing the flock:* To be thoſe whom St. *Pe-*
2 Pet. 2. 1. *ter* deciphers, *There ſhall be lying Maſters, who ſhall bring in Sects of perdition, and denying the Lord that bought them, pulling upon themſelves ſpeedy deſtruction:* To be thoſe An-
1 Joh. 2. 18, 19. tichriſts St. *John* ſpeaks of, *They went out from us, becauſe they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they*

*they had remained with us; but by this they are manifeſt not to be of us:* To be thoſe whom St. *Jude* calls, *Raging waves of the Sea, foaming out their own ſhame, wandring Stars for whom the ſtorm of darkneſs is reſerved for ever. Theſe are they who ſeperate themſelves, ſenſual, not having the Spirit.* Or as elſewhere, *Having indeed a form of godlineſs, & denying the power thereof.* ver. 13, & 19. 2 Tim. 3. 5.

And therefore St. *Paul* earneſtly deſires the Faithful to be of one heart, and of one mind, and that in moſt moving and ſoul-melting expreſſions; *I beſeech you Brethren,* ſays he, *by the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame things, that there be no Schiſms among ſt you, but ye be perfectly of the ſame mind, and of the ſame judgment.* Neither is he leſs pathetical in this point to the *Epheſians*; *I the priſoner of the Lord beſeech you to be careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One Body one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm.* And that this unity 1 Cor. 1. 10. Epheſ. 4. 2, 3, &c.

might

might be preſerved in the Church,
Eph. 4. 11, 12. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, others to be Evangeliſts, others Paſtors and Doctors, for the perfecting the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edification of the body of Chriſt, 'till we all meet in the unity of Faith, and be not toſs'd and carried about with the wind of every Doctrine.* And no leſs earneſtly does he deſire the *Romans* to ſtand upon their guard againſt all Separatiſts and falſe Chriſtians. Rom. 16. *I beſeech you Brethren,* ſays he, *obſerve them who make diſſentions and ſcandals amongſt you, contrary to the Doctrine which you have received, and void them; for ſuch men ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own luſts; and by kind Speeches and fair words ſeduce the hearts of the ſimple.* And being an important point, tells alſo the *Theſſalonians, If any one obey not our word, accompany not with ſuch a one, that he may be confounded.* And 2 Theſſ. 3. 14. in his Inſtructions to *Titus* Biſhop of *Crete, A man that is an* Heretick *after the firſt and ſecond admonition avoid,*

*avoid, knowing that ſuch a one is ſubverted and ſinneth, being condemned by his own judgment.* Yea, St. *Paul* thunders out excommunication againſt the very Angels themſelves, if they ſhould offer to pervert the Tradition of Faith, by that famous place ſo much urged againſt *Hereticks, If we, or an Angel from Heaven preach unto you any other Goſpel then what ye have received, let him be accurſed.* Upon which words *Vincentius Lyrinenſis* thus deſcants, *Ne forſitan perfunctorie*, &c. *Leſt it ſhould ſeem to be the ſuperficial effuſion of humane paſſion, and not the decree of Divine reaſon, he doth inculcate and ſtrike it home with the pondrous force of a reiterated inſinuation, as we have pronounced; ſo I ſay again, If any preach unto you but what ye have received, let him be accurſed.* This indeed is a ſure Rule of Faith amongſt *Catholicks*, (viz.) Oral Tradition of the Church, upon which grounding our ſelves for what is revealed, our Faith is one and the ſame throughout the whole World,

Gallat. l. 8, 9.

Commo. ca. 12, 13.

without any change or alteration: which *Hereticks* forſaking, *are toſt about* (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *with the wind of every Doctrine*, deceiving and being deceived, ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the Truth.

From all which appears. Firſt; That Church-Communion conſiſts in unity of Faith and Worſhip, under the ſame Rule and Government of Divine Inſtitution; there being no other way to bring many into the Integrity of a myſtical Body.

Secondly, That when *Schiſms* ariſe in this body by men of perverſe minds, to break Church-unity; or *Hereſies*, to pervert Church-doctrine; the Apoſtles, to prevent ſuch contagious evils, have inſtructed true Believers to know *Schiſmaticks*, who become ſuch by ſeparating themſelves from the Communion of the Church, whereof formerly they were Members, and erecting new Churches or Congregations; and to diſcern *Hereticks* who

who become such in teaching Doctrines contrary to the Faith delivered to the Saints by Apostolical Tradition; of which that Church being the only Preserver, of necessity must be the sole Judge of the other.

And thirdly, when such were obstinately contumaceous in breaking unity, and corrupting Faith, they did cast them out of the Church by Excommunication, *That in delivering such to Satan, others might learn not to Blaspheme.* And after that direful Sentence, though they did profess the Name of Christ, they were never esteemed as Members of the *Catholick* Church, but as *Heathens and Publicans*, 'till they were restored upon repentance. Mat. 18.

Answerable to which is the constant Doctrine of Antiquity, contain'd in the Fathers, as a cloud of Witnesses, not to darken, but clear up Truth, if it be not yet bright enough to discover *Heresie* and *Schisme* to us. St. *Irenæus* notably describes Church-unity in these

L. 1. adv. hæc. c. 3. words. *Hanc fidem*, &c. *This Faith, as aforesaid, the Church scatter'd over the face of the Earth doth carefully keep, as dwelling in one House, Believes alike, as having one soul and one heart; Preaches and delivers to her Children alike, as having one mouth. For though in the World are different Languages, yet the vertue of Tradition is one and the same. And neither the Churches which are founded in* Germany *do believe otherwise; and teach otherwise by Tradition; nor those who are in* Iberia, *nor those in the* East, *nor those in* Egypt; *but as the Sun is one and the same in the whole World, so the Light of the Gospel shines every where, and enlightens all men with the same beams, who will come to the knowledge of the Truth. And neither he who among Church Governours is powerful in Speech preaches otherwise then these, for none's above his Master; nor he who is less Eloquent will diminish Tradition. For Faith being one and the same, neither he who is large in his explications, adds; nor he who is brief takes away.*

What

What can be more expreſs for the unity of Faith, and the ground of of it, *Tradition*?

And St. *Cyprian* is no leſs clear for unity of Government, *Eccleſiæ unitatem*, &c. *Whoſoever keeps not the unity of the Church, doth he think he holds the Faith? who diſobeys the Church, who forſakes the Chair of* Peter, *upon which the Church is founded, doth he believe that he's in the Church?* Can a *Proteſtant* read this, and not ſee his own Condemnation? This hath been the Original, not only of theirs, but of the *Hereſies* and *Schiſms* in all Ages. *Neque enim aliunde Hæreſes obortæ ſunt, neque nata ſunt* Schiſmata, *&c. For* Hereſies *and* Schiſms, ſays the ſame glorious Saint and Martyr, *have ſprung from no other head, but that the Prieſt of God is not obeyed; nor one Prieſt for the preſent in the Church, and Chriſts Vicar is not thought on: Whom if all Chriſtians obeyed according to the command of God, no man would rend the unity of the Church by* Schiſm; *nor pleaſing his own fancy, and ſwel-*

*I. de Uni. Eccl.*

*S. Cypri. Epiſt. 55. ad Corne.*

*ling with full ſails of pride by himſelf, out of the communion of the Church, would ſhipwrack his Faith on the rock of* Hereſie.

Cont. Greſc Gram. *What is* Schiſm, ſaith St. *Auſtin, but a Separate communion of ſuch, who are united in the ſame Faith and Worſhip with the Catholick Church? But* Hereſie *is a diverſe belief from the Faith of the Church.* So that *Schiſm* properly is oppos'd to Charity, becauſe 'tis a breach of Unity: *Hereſie* properly is oppos'd to Verity, becauſe 'tis a corruption of Faith. To which *Schiſm* does ſo fatally diſpoſe, that that of St. *Hierom* is no leſs than an Oracle, *Nullum Schiſma eſt, quod non ſibi aliquam Hæreſim confingat; ut recte ab Eccleſiâ receſſiſſe videcatur. There's no* Schiſm, *which doth not invent ſome* Hereſie, *to juſtify its ſeparation from the Church.*

Super illud Titi 3. Hæreticum hominem, &c.

Which is not to be taken ſo rigorouſly, that every one who errs in a point of Faith is preſently to be cenſur'd for an *Heretick.* For one may hold what is *Hereſy*, and yet not be an *Heretick*; (as St. *Cyprian* hold-

holding the invalidity of Baptiſm given by *Hereticks*) pertinacy being eſſential to make an *Heretick*, after the Churches declaration in the point. Which is manifeſt by that of St. *Auſtin* againſt the *Donatiſts*, *Hæreſis ſemper pertinaciam adjunctam habet*, &c. Hereſie *is always joyned with pertinacy*, *which conſiſts in this*; *that any one knowingly and witingly holds any point againſt the* Catholick Faith, *and neglecting the Authority of the Church, makes choice of his own Opinion, and perſiſts in it: Grant ſome body believes of Chriſt what* Photinus *believ'd, being perſwaded 'tis the* Catholick Faith, *I do not pronounce him yet an* Heretick, *except the* Catholick Doctrine *being manifeſted to him, he had rather reſiſt Faith, and chooſe to adhere to his own Tenet.* And therefore the ſame Holy Father ſays of himſelf, *Errare poßum, Hæreticus eſſe non volo, Though I may err, I will be no* Heretick. Becauſe in all points of Faith he had a mind prepared to ſubmit his private judgment to the

*L. 4. cont. Donat. ca. 16.*

publick Sentence of the Church: By which means it came to paſs, that St. *Cyprian* holding a material *Hereſie* was abſolved, and thoſe who adhered to his judgment, after the Churches determination to the contrary, were condemn'd for *Hereticks*. Whereupon *Vincentius Lyrinenſis* breaks forth into exclamation, *O rerum mira converſio*, &c. *O wonderful change of things! the Authors of the ſame Opinion are* Catholicks, *but the Followers are adjudged* Hereticks: *The Maſters are abſolved, the Diſciples are condemned; Writers of ſuch Books ſhall be Sons of the Kingdom, but Hell ſhall receive the Maintainers of them. For who doubts but moſt B.* Cyprian, *that Light of all Saints, and Biſhops, and Martyrs, to reign with Chriſt in everlaſting glory? Or who on the contrary is ſo Sacrilegious as to deny but that the* Donatiſts, *and ſuch like Diſeaſes of Religion, who by the Authority of that Council boaſt that Rebaptization is lawful, ſhall burn for ever with the Devil in Hell fire?*

*Cont.* Hær. *ca.* 11.

Thus

Thus the Holy Fathers believ'd and taught. And therefore we find St. *Hierom* in his Expoſition of the *Creed* ſubmitting himſelf and Writings to *Damaſus*, the then Biſhop of *Rome*, as ſupreme Paſtor of the Univerſal Church, *Hæc eſt Fides*, Papa *Beatiſſime*, &c. *This is the Faith, moſt Bleſſed* Pope, *which we have learn'd in the* Catholick Church; *in which if any thing be deliver'd not with ſufficient skill and circumſpection, we deſire you to correct it, who profeſſes the Faith and Chair of* Peter. *But if this our Confeſſion be approved by your Apoſtolical Sentence, whoſoever will find fault with me, will prove himſelf ignorant or malevolent, or alſo no* Catholick, *not me an* Heretick. And *Optatus* concludes the *Donatiſts* not to be Members of the true Church, becauſe they were not in communion with *Syricius*, who was then *Pope* of *Rome*. Neither is St. *Auſtin* leſs poſitive in determining who are *Schiſmaticks*, *Ille eſt in vera Eccleſia*, &c. *He is in the true Church, who knows himſelf by com-*

*Ad Dama. Papam in fine.*

*Contra Parmeno. l. 3.*

*Epiſt. 171.*

*communicatory Letters,* (which anciently were in uſe) *to be a Member of the* Roman *Church, in which the Primacy of the Apoſtolical Chair always flouriſh'd.*

More need not be ſaid at preſent to ſhew that to be true Members of the *Catholick* Church is to live in the ſame communion with the ſupreme Paſtor thereof, under the ſame Government, in the acknowledgment of the ſame Articles of Faith, in the participation of the ſame Sacraments, in the ſame manner of worſhip, brought down to us by *Tradition* from Chriſt and his Apoſtles: And to be ſeparated from this One and *Catholick* Communion, after once we have been Incorporated by Baptiſm, is formal *Schiſm*; pertinaciouſly to contradict her Doctrines of Faith, is formal *Hereſie.*

Thus the Scripture and Ancient Fathers concerning the nature of *Hereſie* and *Schiſm.* Now let us ſee whether the *Proteſtant* Church of *England,* by ſeparating from her *Catholick* Mother in Doctrine and Government,

vernment, be not both *Schiſmatical* and *Heretical*, whatever is pretended to the contrary.

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## Sect. II.

### *Wherein is ſhew'd that the* Proteſtant *Church of* England *is guilty of* Schiſm *and* Hereſie, *by their Separation from the* Roman.

THe Separation of the *Engliſh Proteſtants* from the whole body of Chriſtians, into a Church by themſelves, is a matter of Fact not ſo Ancient, that it cannot be eaſily traced.

The Caſe in ſhort was this, King *Henry* the Eighth was of the ſame Faith and Communion with his Pious Predeceſſors, from the very firſt Converſion of our Iſland, and the whole Church in all Ages, 'till the

the *Popes* Spiritual Power did croſs his Amorous deſires. And then (alas) the unruly paſſion of Love ſo blinded his Reaſon, that he could not ſee, or would not longer acknowledge the Primacy of the Church of *Rome*, which not long before he had ſo famouſly maintain'd againſt *Luther* the Apoſtate, that deſervedly he was rewarded with the glorious Title of *Defender of the Faith*. For giving way to his Intemperate pleaſure, he fell paſſionately enamour'd on *Anne Bullen*; who being of a ſubtil wit, and perceiving the King charmed with her Beauty, was reſolv'd not to yeild to his Will, unleſs he would firſt marry her.

This her reſolute denyal did blow up the fire of his Love to a greater height, and he being toſs'd up and down with the billows of ſeveral paſſions, determin'd at laſt with himſelf to quench thoſe raging flames with her embraces, according to her own terms, though the impediments ſeem'd almoſt inſuperable, and the con-

conſequences might prove very ſad. Hereupon he pretends ſcruples of Conſcience about his Marriage with Queen *Catharine*, no leſs then 22 years after their ſolemn Eſpouſals, ſealed with the endearing pledge of Iſſue to ſucceed him in the Royal Throne. And upon his hot Devotion to his new Saint, he grew ſuddenly ſo tender-hearted in the point, that by all means his former Marriage muſt be diſannull'd, that the ſtorm and inquietude in his breaſt might be appeaſed. And forthwith Addreſſes are made to the *Pope*, to Commiſſionate *Legates* in *England* to hear and determine the buſineſs with all poſſible ſpeed. But the Queen appealing from them to *Rome*, by the advice of her moſt Learned and Counſcientious Councel; and the *Pope* underſtanding the equity of her Caſe, and how much it might be endanger'd where the King had ſo much power, accepting of her Appeal, recals the hearing of it to Himſelf; and after mature deliberation, notwithſtanding all attempts

and

and political motives to the contrary, gave it, as he was bound in Conſcience, on the Queens ſide, againſt the King. Which indeed was no more then to ratify what before had been adjudg'd lawful both by the Apoſtolical Chair, with the approbation of the Chriſtian World.

His Majeſty now perceiving that all hopes were paſs'd to procure from *Rome* a Divoce from his Lawful Wife, and Vertuous Queen, (whom he could not but Honour, even while he perſecuted) and a Diſpenſation to Marry his Beloved, he grew highly enraged; and paſſion ſo far prevail'd, that abandoning *Catholick* Chriſtian Peace and Unity, he renounces all obedience to the Church, caſts the *Popes* Authority out of *England* under pain of death to the Acknowledger, makes himſelf ſole Head of the Church in his own Dominions, and conſequently Judge in his own Cauſe, and then no queſtion all things muſt paſs for him, and an uſurped power would effect what Juſtice

Juſtice could not: In a word, he Divorces himſelf from his moſt Religious and Vertuous Queen, ſhakes hands (as I may ſay) with Religion, and joyns himſelf to *Anne Bullen.*

This was the original of this fatal *Schiſm*; from this impure fountain ſtream'd a deluge of miſeries upon our ('till then) moſt happy Iſland. For no ſooner had he, to ſatisfy his luſts, remov'd the rampire of Church Government, (the ſole preſervative of Faith and Uuity) but an inundation of Evils broke in violently upon us; and with *Schiſm*, likewiſe *Hereſie*, *Sacriledge*, *Oppreſſion*, ruine of *Churches* and *Monaſteries*, extirpation of *Holy Orders*, contempt of *Religion*, by making it lyable to perpetual changes, uncertainties and and confuſions, as ſad experience hath but too clearly manifeſted.

Thus was the *Proteſtant Reformation* (as they call it) in *England* firſt brought forth into the World, and theſe are the Miſeries which attended it.

I wiſh this point might be ſeriouſly and impartially weighed, and I doubt not but by God's Grace it would prove to others, as it did to me, a ſtrong motive to return to *Catholick* Unity.

And here it will not be amiſs to take notice what mark the Holy Scriptures have ſtamp'd upon *Schiſm*, and *Schiſmaticks* to be known by. Act. 20. *Among your ſelves*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *ſhall ariſe men teaching perverſe things, to draw Diſciples after them.* So did their firſt Reformers, being Members of the *Catholick* Church, 'till they contradicted the Doctrine which they before believ'd, with the whole Body of *Chriſtianity*, to come from Chriſt himſelf and his Apoſtles, teaching new Doctrines to draw Diſciples after them. 1 John 2. *They went out from us*, ſaith St. *John*: And ſo did they, erecting a new communion diſtinct from the univerſality of *Chriſtians*, under a new Church Government; it being never heard of before, that a Secular perſon ſhould be Head of a Spiri-

Spiritual Body, or that Chriſt had left ſuch an Oeconomy in his Church. Scripture then condemns them, for it condemns ſuch, *Who will not hear the Church*; it condemns ſuch, *who will not obey the word of her Governours*; it condemns ſuch, *who ſeperate themſelves, who cauſe Diſſention and Scandals, contrary to the Doctrine delivered to the Saints.* And ſuch were they as evidently in matter of fact, as any thing that's left upon Record in the World. If therefore, whoſoever before them in the like ſort ſeparated themſelves from the Church, were accounted *Schiſmaticks* by all *Catholick* Chriſtians, how came they to be no *Schiſmaticks* by their Separation?

Mat. 18. 2 Theſſ. 3. *St.* Jude Rom. 16, 17.

Never let them pretend any cauſe given on the Church's ſide to juſtify them; for the Church can give no juſt cauſe to her Children to ſeparate from her communion; except they will ſay Chriſt hath not left his Church ſufficient means to maintain Unity. Beſides, the Fa-

thers tell them that 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be juſt cauſe for any to ſeparate from the Communion of the *Catholick* Church, St. *Irænæus* is very plain, *It is impoſſible to receive ſuch an injury or provocation from the Governours of the Church, as to make a ſeparation excuſeable.* And St. *Auſtin* is as poſitive, *It is impoſſible there ſhould be any juſt cauſe to make a ſeparation from the Communion of all Nations.* And therefore Antiquity judg'd a ſeparation from the body of the Church, how ſpecious ſoever were the pretences of the dividers, to be a ſufficient evidence to prove ſuch, formal *Schiſmaticks* by the very matter of fact, without any other argument. *I object to you the crime of* Schiſm, *ſays the ſame Holy Father to the* Donatiſts, *which you will deny, and I will preſently prove, becauſe you do not communicate with all Nations.* Upon which grounds, if the Ancient Fathers were now living, they muſt of neceſſity condemn *Proteſtants*, as well as *Arrians* or *Donatiſts* in their days.

*L. adver. hær.*

*Epiſt.* 48.

*St* Auſt. *cont. Petilian.*

And

And thus being condemn'd both by Scripture and Antiquity for *Schiſmaticks*, I know not what, or who can juſtify their Separation, or the continuers and maintainers of it.

It is not the Votes of a Parliament, whom Chriſt never made Church Governours, nor Judges in Controverſies in points of Faith; 'tis not the Acts of a National Synod held by a few *Schiſmatical* Biſhops, when ſuch Councils even of *Catholick* Biſhops may, and have erred; 'Tis not the conſent of two *Univerſities*, either for fear, or flattery, or ſelf-intereſt renouncing the *Papal* Authority in *England*, and acknowledging the King Supreme Head of the Church in his Dominions; 'tis not any or all of theſe can bear them out, and make them innocent. Yea, theſe conſequent Acts make their *Schiſm* far more inexcuſable: For what in the beginning the height of paſſion might ſomewhat extenuate, by this ſolemn deliberation became more voluntary, and ſo aggravated the former malignity.

However, notwithſtanding this undeniable prevarication, they have patch'd up ſome Fig-leaves together to cover the nakedneſs of their *Schiſm*; and that they are no better, I ſhall endeavour to make appear in the following *Sections*.

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## SECT. III.

*Wherein the* Proteſtants *plea, that they did not ſeparate from the Church, but were forcibly caſt out from her Communion, and therefore the* Schiſm, *which is a voluntary receſſion from the Church, not imputable to them, is anſwered.*

SEeing it cannot be denyed, but that the firſt Reformers were bred in the bowels of the *Roman* Church,

Church, communicating with her before this unhappy rupture, to wipe off from them the odious crime of *Schiſm*, they lay the fault upon the *Catholick* Church for caſting them out by force from the Communion; whereas *Schiſm* is a voluntary receſſion from the Church, and theirs was not, they not ſeparating themſelves, but being ſeparated.

In anſwer to which I ſay firſt, that never were any *Hereticks* or *Schiſmaticks*, even whom they acknowledge for ſuch, in any Age caſt out from among the Faithful, by Sentence of Excommunication for their contumacy, but they might with as much ſhow of reaſon uſe the ſame plea for their juſtification.

Secondly, how can they impute their ſeparation to the Church, when after her utmoſt endeavours to maintain unity, they would by no means be perſwaded that it was lawful to communicate with her in Doctrine and Worſhip; herein preferring their own private opinions before

the judgment of the whole Chriſtian world.

But thirdly, how frivolous this plea is, will moſt manifeſtly appear, if they will but conſider what was acted by themſelves wholly antecedent to the cenſure of the Church.

That the Church hath juſt Power and Authority to Excommunicate ſuch of her Subjects who deſerve it, is confeſs'd on all ſides. Yea, that ſhe's obliged to cut off corrupted and incorrigible Members from the body of Chriſtianity, (leſt others be infected with their errours,) is plain to common ſenſe. And that it was the practice of the Church in all Ages to injoyn the Faithful to abſtain from Communion with thoſe who pertinaciouſly maintain'd a different Faith from her, no man can doubt, who knows any thing in Church-hiſtory.

Now, when they had voluntarily receded from the Doctrine and Government of their *Catholick* Mother, (or if any compulſion appear'd in the buſineſs, it was not on the Churches

Churches part, but from their new Spiritual Head the King:) when they had demoliſh'd Monaſteries, ceiz'd on their Revenues, Perſecuted the moſt Conſcientious of the Clergy, Confiſcated the Eſtates of contradictors, and put to death ſome, moſt eminent for Learning and Piety, becauſe they would not proſtitute their Faith and Conſcience to the Kings aſſumed Authority in Church Affairs: When they had aboliſh'd the publick Worſhip of the Church as Superſtitious and Idolatrous, and caſt out moſt of the Sacraments as prophane and unholy things. when they had moulded a Religion according to the policy of State, and Intereſts of the great ones, who had added to themſelves by taking from the Church: When they had forſaken the only certain Rule of Faith, and made way for innumerable Sects and Subdiviſions, which they have found too true by ſad experience: (God laſhing them with their own rod, that they may ſee their ſin in the glaſs of their

puniſhment.) And laſtly, when to fill up the meaſure of their ſins they remained unrelenting and obſtinate in their manifold diſorders, and miſs-called Reformations in the Churches Faith and Diſcipline when they had done and acted this in a moſt violent and head-ſtrong manner, to the wonder and pity of the underſtanding World; and all poſſible means being us'd to reduce them to the *Catholick* Unity, from which they were fallen, but all in vain: The Church then, and not 'till then, by Authority Chriſt proceeding according to her duty and conſtant practice in like caſes, to the juſt Sentence of Excommunication: They cry out not guilty, they are innocent and have done nothing amiſs, the *Schiſm* is not to be laid to their charge, who made no voluntary receſſion from the Church; But to the Church, who againſt their wills did caſt them out. Juſt as if a Malefactor, who hath made himſelf incapable of Mercy by his unpardonable offences, ſhould accuſe

*Anno* 10. *Eliz. Reg.*

accuſe the Judge as guilty of his death, becauſe he pronounces on him the Sentence of Condemnation. Is not this a pretty plea to excuſe themſelves from *Schiſm*? So bad a cauſe ſtands in need of better Arguments to maintain it ſelf.

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## SECT. IV.

*Wherein is ſhew'd the emptineſs of their Plea, that they did not ſeparate from the Univerſal, but only from the particular Church of* Rome.

BUt ſeeing there is a palpable *Schiſm* in the Church by their new erected Eccleſiaſtical Government, and they cannot make the World believe that the Church of *Rome*, not They, was the dividing party and Actors in this ſeparation; being ſo contrary to the nature and notion

notion of *Schism* from Scripture and Antiquity, yea, and a common ſenſe; (for how could a Church poſſibly ſeparate from a Communion whereof they never were Members?) though it ſhould be granted that they made the ſeparation, yet they ſay, that *Schiſm* being a voluntary departure from the Communion of the *Catholick* Church, they cannot be condemn'd for *Schiſmaticks* who only ſeparated themſelves from the particular Church of *Rome*.

But alas! this is no better then a Cob-web Plea to keep *Proteſtants* from falling into the Gulph of *Schiſm*.

For firſt, grant that the Church of *Rome* be but a particular Church, yet as ſuch 'tis a true Member of the *Catholick* Church; as the moſt Learned *Proteſtants* of the Church of *England* not only grant, but contend for againſt other *Diſſenters*, and ſo they could not ſeparate from the Church of *Rome* as ſuch, but of neceſſity they muſt ſeparate from the whole, with whom ſhe, as part thereof communicated.

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Secondly, if the ſeparation was only made from the particular Church of *Rome*, and not from the Univerſal, let them ſhew us any Body of *Chriſtians* agreeing with their *Proteſtant* Church in all Material points of Faith and practice, to whom the firſt *Reformers* united themſelves when they made a ſeparation from their *Catholick* Mother. If Communion with the *Greek* Church be pretended, 'tis moſt irrational, when condemned by themſelves in their Belief concerning the Proceſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, *Maſs*, *Tranſubſtantiation*, &c. And indeed if they will be of their Communion, they muſt agree with us almoſt in all points wherein they now differ from us, and alledge as juſt cauſes of their ſeparation. But how juſtly, ſhall be ſcann'd hereafter. If with the *Lutherans*, 'tis as vainly pretended, for by the Confeſſion of thoſe who made a full ſearch into the *Lutheran* Tenets, they agree in more points with the Church of *Rome* againſt the *Engliſh Proteteſtants*

*ſtants*, then on the contrary. And 'tis well known that when the Controverſies were hot between the *Remonſtrants* and *Contra-Remonſtrants*, as *Hereticks* are always as well fighting among themſelves, as againſt the Church) the *Remonſtrants* plainly aſſerted, they would ſooner return into the Boſome of their *Catholick* Mother, then joyn in thoſe points with the *Calviniſts*; with whom of all other Sects the *Engliſh Proteſtants* may moſt pretend to have Communion. Which nevertheleſs hath as airy a foundation as either of the other, when the greateſt *Patrons* and *Goliahs* of the *Engliſh Reformation* condemn the *Calviniſts* of fundamental Errors, in denying *Epiſcopacy* to be *jure divino*, and the Kings *Supremacy* in *Eccleſiaſtical matters*; and for differing from them in other points contain'd in their 39 *Articles* and *Book of Common-Prayer*, their publick *Liturgy*, and way of *Worſhip*. And ſo while they ſeparate from the particular Church of *Rome*, as they pre-

pretend, and not from the *Catholick*, from which they grant no man ought to ſeparate; they notwithſtanding are found to be left by themſelves, a Church of their own conſtituting, finding no part of Chriſts *Catholick* Church, or any other, with whom, when they ſeparated from the *Roman Communion*, they actually joyn'd themſelves, or do yet, in the belief of the ſame *Articles of Faith*, in the acknowledgment and ſubmiſſion to the ſame *Church Government*, in the participation of the ſame *Sacraments* and way of *Worſhip*, which are eſſentially requiſite to Church-union.

But thirdly, though no *Catholick* denyes the Church of *Rome*, as taken for the peculiar *Dioceſs* belonging to the Biſhop of *Rome*, is a particular Church, as well as the Church of *Epheſus*, or Church of *Corinth*; and the *Pope* as Biſhop of this *Roman* Congregation belonging to no other Juriſdiction, is a particular Biſhop: Yet ſeeing alſo, that all

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*Catholick* Chriſtians do, and the firſt *Proteſtant Reformers* did believe before their ſeparation, that the *Roman* Church as taken for the whole collection of the Faithful (as holding Communion with the See of *Rome*, is the *Catholick* Church;) and that the *Pope* of *Rome*, as ſucceeding St. *Peter* in his *Primacy* by divine Right add Inſtitution, hath a Univerſal Headſhip and Juriſdiction in Spiritual matters over all particular Churches: I ſay, the whole *Catholick* World, and firſt *Engliſh* Reformers thus believing before their ſeparation, they ſtand condemn'd for *Schiſmaticks* by the moſt Sacred and higheſt Tribunal on Earth; not for ſeparating from the particular Church and Biſhop of *Rome*, but from the Communion of the *Roman* Church as *Catholick* in reſpect of the extent of her Power and Juriſdiction, and the *Pope* as St. *Peters* Succeſſor, ſupream Paſtor and Head thereof. And this guilt will never be wip'd off, 'till it be evidenced that the Chriſtian World is in an error

error, and believes a lye; and that the Supream and Univerſal Juriſdiction of the *Pope* of *Rome* is but a meer uſurpation and innovation in the Church. But this the *Proteſtants* neither have done, nor ever will be able to do, and yet ought to have been done by the firſt *Reformers* before they ſeparated; or by the continuers of it, for the juſtification. Which is an attempt no leſs deſperate, then to endeavour to perſwade the World that the judgment of a few intereſſed, paſſionate perſons, may not only ballance, but alſo ought to out-weigh and be preferred before the greateſt Authority and certainty we have on earth.

This is enough to manifeſt the unity of this Plea to any unbyaſſed and indifferent judgments. But becauſe *Proteſtants* do ſadly deceive themſelves in being perſwaded they are true Members of the *Catholick* Church, by impoſing upon the word *Catholick* a notion different from the moſt uſual and common

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ſenſe of the Church in all Ages; and thereby ſatisfy themſelves that their ſeparation is neither damnable nor dangerous, that is, not *Schiſmatical*; this being a proper place for it, I ſhall endeavour to undeceive them by applying the word to its genuine acceptation, in which ſenſe it had much influence on my Converſion.

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## SECT. V.

### *The ſenſe and meaning of the word* Catholick, *as it is us'd by the* Church.

THE Church is ſaid to be *Catholick* in three reſpects. Firſt *ratione loci*, according to univerſality of place, whereby 'tis diſtinguiſh'd from the *Jewiſh* Synagogue. For the partition-wall being broken down by Chriſt the chief corner ſtone of this Spiritual building, both *Jew* and *Gentile* were united into one

Mat. 28. 19.
Mar. 16. 15.
Jo. 4. 21.
Act. 1. 8.
Ro. 1. 17.
Ro. 10. 12.
Eph 2. 14.

one and the ſame body of Chriſtianity, extending it ſelf into all corners of the World. Hence it is that of St. *Cyril*, *The Church is called* Catholick, *becauſe 'tis ſpread over all the World from one end to the other.* Whereas before, the true Worſhip was confin'd to *Judæa* and the *Jewiſh* Nation.

Secondly, the Church of Chriſt is *Catholick*, *ratione temporis*, according to univerſality of time from its firſt exiſtence; becauſe being once founded by our Bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtles, 'tis to continue by a non-interrupted viſible ſucceſſion of Paſtors and People to the Worlds end. Which is no leſs expreſs in Scripture than the former. Take it from the mouth of an Angel, *And of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end.* Or if that be not ſufficient, from the Sacred Lips of *Truth* it ſelf, *Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* What? but for a time? No, not ſo; But *behold I am with you always, even to the Worlds end.*

Mat. 15. 14. Dan. 3. 44. *Eccleſia vera neminem latere poteſt S.* Aug *de Unit. Eccl. cap.* 14. Luke 1. 18 Mat. 16. 18. Mat. 28. 20.

This universality is as essential to make the Church *Catholick* as the former, and hereby 'tis not only distinguish'd from the *Jewish* Worship, which being Ceremonial and Typical, was but to continue for a time, and to vanish when the *Sun* of Righteousness appeared: But also from all *Shismatical* and *Heretical* Communions of false Christians, who separating themselves from this *Catholick* Church thus founded to continue for ever, do erect new Congregations distinct from it. Which new-born Communions, whatever were their pretences to separate from the old, though professing the name of Christ, *Catholicks* did never account any more true Members of Christs Mystical Body, or part of the Universal Church, as now *Protestants* pretend to be since their separation, then either *Jews* or *Heathens*, who never acknowledged Christ to their Saviour.

Witness St. *Irenæus*, *We must obey those Priests that are in the Church, those*

*l.* 4 *contr. Hær. ca.* 13

*those that have a succession from the Apostles,* &c. *And all the rest who have departed from the original succession (where ever they be assembled) are to be look'd upon as* Hereticks *or* Schismaticks, *and all these fall from the Truth.*

Witness St. *Austin*, whom some call the Tongue of the Church, and certainly he speaks her Doctrine, when he tells the *Donatists*, *You are with us in* Baptism, *in the* Creed, *and in the other Sacraments of our Lord, but in the Spirit of Unity, and finally in the* Catholick *Church you are not with us.* And therefore he says confidently with us elsewhere, *Let him adore Idols, saith the Devil, he's mine; let him remain in the superstition of the* Jews, *he's mine; let him quit Unity, and pass over to This, or That, or any* Heresie, *he's mine.* And no wonder, seeing that *corruptio, optimi est pessima, Nothing is so bad as the greatest good corrupted;* For though extensive *Judaism* and *Paganism* involve a far greater number of damnable errors; yet in- *Epist. 48. contr. Don.*

tenſive more malignity is often couch'd in *Schiſm* and *Hereſy*, by reaſon of their exceeding perverſeneſs and obſtinacy, being ſins againſt the greater light and means of grace to come to the acknowledgement of truth.

Now the *Proteſtants* finding themſelves wholly at a loſs in this particular, it being impoſſible for them to ſhew a viſible ſucceſſion of their Doctrine and Government in Paſtors and People from Chriſt and his Apoſtles to this preſent Age, (which is a ſufficient evidence they neither are the true Church, nor any part of it) they will by no means allow the word *Catholick* in the *Creed* to be underſtood of a uninterrupted viſible ſucceſſion of Chriſtian Belief and Worſhip in external Communion, as Antiquity interprets it; but referring it to Doctrine only, will needs have it ſufficient to be true Members of the *Catholick* Church, to profeſs the name of Chriſt, and believe ſome Articles always taught and acknowledged, though

*S. Aug. Ep.* 48.

though of a diſtinct Communion wholly, and in many points of a different belief from the perpetually viſible Church. And think they have done enough to prove their Church Univerſal in reſpect of time, becauſe the Church of *Rome*, from whom they ſeparated, did never fail nor ceaſe to be a true Church, though, as theſe men pretend, much corrupted. Which to my apprehenſion is as much as to ſay, that they who are of different Faiths in a different Communion, are notwithſtanding, of the ſame Faith, in the ſame Communion; and parts ſeparated from the Body yet actually continue Members of it. And that a Commonwealth of ten years old may juſtly maintain themſelves to be of a thouſand years ſtanding, becauſe Monarchy, which they caſt out to ſet up their new Commonwealth, was of ſuch continuance by a viſible ſucceſſion, and agrees with them in ſome common Principles of Reaſon and Government. Who can reſolve theſe riddles? Are not

theſe pretty props to uphold the new *Proteſtant* Church to be of the Ancient *Catholick* Faith.

Strange! Can men of Reaſon ſatisfy their Conſciences in what concerns eternal Salvation? What is the *Catholick* Church but a Congregation of Believers united in Faith, and Worſhip? And yet to hem theſe men in, *Jeruſalem* muſt not be as a City at unity with it ſelf, but a body compoſed of Antipathies and Contradictions. Let them ſpeak ingenuouſly, will not this way of arguing make *Arrians*, and *Donatiſts*, or any old condemned *Hereticks* to be Members of the *Catholick* Church as well as *Proteſtants*? The *Arrians* did deny but one point of *Catholick* belief, and were caſt out; And ſhall the *Proteſtants*, who deny many, be kept in, and reputed Members? Shall that abſolve the *Proteſtants*, which condemns the *Arrians*? For 'tis not denying this, or that, but any point of the *Catholick* Faith with pertinacy whatever it be, (though *Hereſies* may be more

more or leſs malignant and dangerous) that caſts us out of the true Church, and makes us ceaſe to be actual Members of it.

Beſides, can they as a *Proteſtant* Communion have a perpetual viſible ſucceſſion from the Apoſtles, and yet begin to appear firſt in the World in the days of King *Henry* the viii. 100 years ſince, and ſomewhat more? Is it any thing to their purpoſe, to produce a viſible Congregation of *Believers* in a never-interrupted ſucceſſion of the ſame Faith with them in ſuch points wherein they agree with the *Catholick* Church, when ſuch points are not thoſe which conſtitute them a *Proteſtant* Church, but thoſe wherein they differ from us? If they will with any ſhew of reaſon defend their *Proteſtant* Faith, as ſuch, to have univerſality of time from the Apoſtles, they muſt produce a viſible Body of Chriſtians in Church-Communion, profeſſing thoſe points wherein they differ from the *Roman* Church, and for which they

ſeparated from her, and condemning thoſe points and practices in her, which they now do. Otherwiſe to talk of a perpetual ſucceſſion of the *Proteſtant* Religion in a Communion from the Apoſtles to their preſent Paſtors, is no better then a ſick mans dream, or any airy *Utopia* without any real beeing or exiſtence.

Now the *Puritan-Proteſtants* and many other *Sects*, either not well conſidering the grounds why the moſt Learned of the Reformation defend the Church, of *Rome* to be a true Church and perpetually viſible; or elſe plainly ſeeing the impoſſibility of rationally maintaining their deductions thereon depending; in the ſtorm of a blind zeal againſt the Church of *Rome*, ſplit themſelves againſt another rock, (never caring for perpetual ſucceſſion and viſibility to make them *Catholick*, confidently aſſert) that the Church of Chriſt was over-ſpread with the infernal darkneſs of Superſtition and Idolatry, that it wholly ceas'd to be a true Church for a thouſand years

years and upwards, more or leſs, (for they cannot agree among themſelves about the determinate time which gave this fatal period to Chriſtianity) 'till by their bleſſed Reformation the glorious light of the Goſpel did dawn a-new unto the World; and with the ruines of the Whore of *Babylon*, (hopeful Children to caſt ſuch durt in their Mothers face) they did beautify the revived Spouſe of Jeſus Chriſt. Wherein they wholly agree with the *Donatiſts* of old, who after their ſeparation from the *Catholick* Church, thought they could not defend themſelves from *Schiſm* and *Hereſie*, unleſs they would maintain that the Univerſal Church was totally periſh'd, and ſhrunk into their new-born Conventicle; which hath in it the the mixture of thus much Truth, that no ſeparation from an acknowledged true Church can be juſtifyable. But this is wonderful, that thoſe very men who pretend ſo much veneration of Sacred Scripture, as to make it the

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ſole and adequate Rule of Chriſtian belief, ſhould (notwithſtanding to free their own Religion from *Schiſm* and *Hereſie*) affirm the Church of Chriſt to have periſh'd totally for ſo many Ages; the contrary to which is ſo plainly contain'd in thoſe Sacred Oracles.

Mat. 16. 18. Our Bleſſed Saviour ſays, *That he will build his Church upon a rock, ſo that the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it:* The Angel ſays, *Of his* Luke 1. *Kingdom there ſhall be no end.* Can poſſibly Jeſus Chriſt be with the Mat. 28. 20. Governours of his Church to the Worlds end, to direct them by his ſpecial aſſiſtance, to protect them by his irreſiſtable Power, and yet the Devil ſo far prevail over his beloved Heritage as to ruine it? Can he make good his promiſe of *leading* Joh. 14. 26. *them into all Truth,* and yet ſuffer 16. v. 13. his Church to be corrupted with damnable errors and practices, as totally to periſh? St. *Paul* ſays, *God* Epheſ. 4. 11, &c. *hath placed in his Church ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, others Evangeliſts and Doctors, for the perfecting*

of

*of the Saints, that we might be one and the same faith, and not toss'd and carried about with the wind of every Doctrine. And that the Church is the Pillar and ground of Truth.* These are plain express Texts for the Churches Indefectibility, needing no Interpreter; as St. *Austin* saith in the like case of evident places out of Scripture for the universality of the Church against obscure Texts objected by the *Donatists. And yet this generation of men will palpably pervert plain Texts of Scripture, rather then confess a guilt in separating themselves from their* Catholick *Mother.*

1 Tim 3. 15.

*De Unit. Eccl. c* 16.

*Perkins* a great Champion of the Reformed Religion, saith expressly, *That during the space of* 900. *years the* Popish Heresie *had spread it self over the whole Wold.*

*Expos. of the* Creed, *pa.* 226.

*Calvin* affirms, *That the Church of* Rome *made all the Kings and People of the Earth drunk with the cup of her abomination, from the first to the last.*

*Instit. l.* 4. *c.* 18.

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Treat. of the Church, p. 145. *Bennet Norton* ſays, *The whole Chriſtian World knows that before* Luther, *all Churches were overwhelm'd with more then* Cymerian *darkneſs.*

In Orat. ad Princ. Germa. *Bibliander* a *Lutheran* is very poſitive, *That without all queſtion, from the time of* Gregory *the Great, the* Pope *is* Antichriſt, *who with his abominations hath made drunk all Kings and People, from the higheſt to the loweſt.*

Catal. Doct. Ep. ad Lect. Yet *Simon Voyon* affirms no leſs confidently, *That when* Boniface *was inſtalled, then was that univerſal Apoſtacy from the Faith, foretold by St.* Paul.

And to name no more, *Chamierus* ſaith, *That Apoſtacy averted the whole body from Chriſt.*

Conſider well theſe expreſſions, and then tell me if any thing can be more contrary to Sacred Scripture. Lay them cloſe together that the oppoſition may more viſibly appear. *The Church is builded upon a rock, and the gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt it. Of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end. I will ſend you the*

*the Spirit of Truth, who ſhall lead you into all Truth. The Church is the Pillar and ground of Truth.* Thus teaches Scripture.

Now theſe new Paſtors tell us, *That* Hereſie (which is the ſtrongeſt bar of Hell gates) *overſpread the whole Chriſtian World. That all Churches were overwhelmed with more than* Cymerian *darkneſs. That there was an univerſal Apoſtacy from the Faith. That Apoſtacy averted the whole body from Chriſt.* Are not theſe Doctrines directly contrary to each other? Now which ſhall we believe? For both we cannot, 'till contradictions be both true: Are not theſe rare men to make Apoſtles?

Yet before I part with them, I will ask them one queſtion in St. *Auſtin*'s words, wherewith he expoſtulates the ſame caſe with the *Donatiſts*: *In Scripturis didicimus Chriſtum*, &c. *In the Scriptures we have learned Chriſt; in the Scriptures we have come to the knowledge of the Church. Theſe Scriptures are common to us both; why do we not from them* Ep. 166. ad *Donat.*

*them keep as well the ſame Church, as the ſame Chriſt?* And afterwards, *If for the verity of the Scriptures ye believe in Chriſt, whom ye read of, and ſee not; wherefore do ye deny the Church, which ye both read and ſee?* A Church, which the ſame Father aſſures you, *The Prophets have more plainly ſpoken of then Chriſt himſelf, to prevent miſtakes in a matter of ſo great moment.* A Church, which the Scriptures aſſure you, ſhall (as militant) continue in a viſible ſucceſſion to the end of the World, as triumphant, world without end.

*In Pſal. 30. L. de Vti. cred. c. 7, 8, &c.*

After this one *Catholick* and *Apoſtolick* Church was founded in the World, and began to ſpread it ſelf into all corners, the Members of it were called Chriſtians, to diſtinguiſh them from all not profeſſing Chriſt. But when ſome of themſelves aroſe teaching perverſe things to draw away Diſciples after them; and ſo ſeparating from the Church, whereof once they were Members, erected new Communions; then thoſe Chriſtians who ſtood firm, adhering faſt to

the Church and Doctrine eſtabliſh'd by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, were called *Catholicks*, to diſtinguiſh them from ſuch falſe *Chriſtians*, who had ſeparated themſelves into *Schiſmatical* or *Heretical* Congregations. Which if the *Proteſtants* would conſider aright, they would never argue thus incongruouſly. The *Roman* Church is not the *Catholick* Church, becauſe it comprehends not Us and others in her Communion, who are Chriſtians: when *Catholiciſm* in its genuine notion denotes an Univerſal Communion of true Believers, continuing in the Faith and Worſhip firſt deliver'd to the Saints, in oppoſition to all *Sects* of Chriſtians divided from it, though never ſo many or ſo numerous. Which ſeparation from a Mother-Church is as manifeſt in the *Proteſtants* as in the *Arrians*, or any other *Schiſmatical Hereticks*, who might as well have objected to the true Church, from which they ſeparated, that ſhe was not *Catholick*, becauſe they profeſſing the Name of

of Christ, and holding most points of the Christian Faith, were not Members of her Communion.

So then, a *Catholick* is a Christian communicating with that Church in Faith and Practice, which was founded by Christ and his Apostles. Which Church, doth evidence it self for such, by a perpetual visibility and succession from that time to this present Age: By consequence he is no Member of any new Communion of Christians, gather'd together by some Doctor teaching contrary to the aforesaid Church and Faith received.

Neither would there have been any need of adding *Roman* to the word *Catholick*, had not *Heretick*s arose, denying the Church of *Rome* to be Mother and Mistress of all Churches, and St. *Peter's* Successor to be the supreme visible Head and Pastor of the Faithful; and yet in their divided Communions pretending either to be the only true Church, or a part of it. But then true Believers did, and do commonly

ly call themſelves *Roman-Catholicks* to diſtinguiſh themſelves from all ſuch falſe Churches: And a *Roman-Catholick*, is in plain *Engliſh* a Member of the Church of Chriſt founded by the Apoſtles, ſcatter'd over the face of the whole Earth, in Communion with the Biſhop of *Rome* as ſupreme Head and Paſtor of it. Which the word *Catholick* by it ſelf ſignifies as vertually, this only more expreſly. The Church always being very careful upon emergent occaſions to expreſs her ſelf by diſtinctive marks or terms, ſufficient to point out the only ſafe and high-road to the haven of Happineſs; that thoſe belonging to her charge might not ſhipwrack their Faith on the rock of *Hereſie*, or be ſwallowed up in the gulph of *Schiſm*. And thoſe who are without might know their dadger, and fly to the ſaving Ark, to preſerve themſelves from periſhing in the deluge of their ſins.

Hereupon with the Ancient Fathers, to be a Member of the *Ca-*

*tholick* Church, or of the *Roman* Church, ſignifies the ſame thing; and to be a *Catholick*, is to be in Communion with the *Roman* Biſhop. *Qui Cathedram Petri*, &c *Who hath forſaken the Chair of* Peter, *upon which the Church is founded, doth he perſwade himſelf that he's in the Church?* So that St. *Cyprian*, St. *Hierom* finding diviſions in *Syria*, and every one being greedy to gain ſuch a perſon to their Communion, gave them this Anſwer; *I communicate with him, who communicates with the Chair of* Peter. Which they all pretending to, and it being not poſſible for them to be all *Catholicks* in divided Churches, he earneſtly deſires of *Damaſus* then preſent *Pope*, *Even by the Croſs and Sufferings of Chriſt to write unto him with whom he might communicate in ſuch diſtractions.* As is manifeſt at large in his 58 *Ep.* to the ſaid Biſhop. And in his 57 *Ep.* to the ſame *Pope* among much more, he hath theſe words; *Ego Beatudini tuæ, id eſt, Cathedræ* Petri *communione conſocior,*

*De Unit. Eccl. ca.*

*Ep. 58. ad Dam. Papam.*

or, &c. *I communicate with your Beatitude, that is, the Chair of* Peter, *I know the Church is built on that rock, Whoever eats the Lamb out of this Houſe, is a prophane perſon.* So then in St. *Hierom*'s judgment, *He was no* Catholick *who did not communicate with the Biſhop of* Rome; *and whoever in Church-diviſions adher'd to him, could not be otherwiſe: The* Catholick *Church being founded on the Chair of St.* Peter, *as a rock to remain for ever, maugre all the malice of her enemies.*

The words related by St. *Ambroſe* of his Brother *Satyrus*, are home to this purpoſe. *Rogavit*, &c. *He demanded* (ſaith he) *whether he was of the ſame judgment with the* Catholick *Biſhops, that is, the* Roman *Church. Optatus Milevitanus* proves the *Donatiſts* not to be Members of the *Catholick* Church, *Becauſe they were not in communion with* Syricius, the then Biſhop of *Rome*. And St. *Auſtin* tells every Chriſtian, *He may know himſelf to be in the True Church, if he be a Member of the* Roman

*De obit. Satyri.*

*L. 3. cont. Parme.*

*Epiſt. 162. & 163.*

*Church by Communicatory Letters* (in uſe Anciently) *in which the Primacy of the Apoſtolical Chair always flouriſh'd.* Of which this alſo is a manifeſt argument, in that the Fathers to convince *Separatiſts* that they were no Members of the *Catholick* Church, by ſhewing the true Church to have a perpetual viſible ſucceſſion of Paſtors by Divine inſtitution, always made uſe of the ſucceſſion of the *Roman* Biſhops, reckoning from St. *Peter* to the preſent Biſhop then in poſſeſſion of the Apoſtolical Chair. So St. *Irenæus adver. hær. l.* 3. *ca.* 3, 4. St. *Aug. l. cont. Epiſt. Manich. quam vocant Fundamenti, ca.* 4. St. *Athana. Orat: 2. cont. Arianos. Epiph. hær.* 27. St. *Cypri. l.* 1. *Epiſt.* 6. &c. And at preſent in the common uſe of the word (the beſt key of language) in the mouth of our Adverſaries, all Chriſtians in Communion with the *Roman* Biſhop are called *Catholicks.* St. *Auſtin* obſerves the ſame in his time. *Velint, nolint,* &c. *Will they, nill they not,* (ſays he) Hereticks

*and*

*and* Schiſmaticks *themſelves cannot but call a* Catholick, *a* Catholick. And therefore adviſes to hold the Chriſtian Religion in the Communion of that Church which is *Catholick*, and ſo call'd even by her Adverſaries.

In vain therefore do *Proteſtants* pretend to be Members of the *Catholick* Church, if the Fathers be Judges, not communicating with the Church of *Rome*, acknowledged by them to be true: And as vainly will the *Puritans* have the Church of *Rome* ceaſe wholly to be a Church, to make themſelves a true one; being both alike condemned by Antiquity. Neither can they poſſibly eſcape the force of St. *Auſtin*'s dilemma, wherewith he ſet upon the *Donatiſts*. *Did the Church periſh, or did ſhe not? If ſhe did, what Church then brought forth the* Donatiſts? (We ſay, what Church then brought forth the *Puritans*? Where received their firſt Founders their Faith and Baptiſm? From whom had they deliver'd to them *Lib. 1. cont. Gaud. c. 7.*

the Sacred Oracles?) This argument ſtrikes them dead. S. *Auſtin* proceeds, *If ſhe did not periſh, what madneſs mov'd you to ſeparate your ſelves from her, on the pretence of avoiding the communion of bad men?* This argument confounds the *Proteſtants* who acknowledge ſhe did not periſh, and yet will not confeſs the madneſs of their ſeparation; but endeavour to juſtify it, though the ſame Father affirms poſitively, *We are certain, no man can juſtly ſeparate himſelf from the communion of all Nations.* And again, *All ſeparation made before the drawing of the net on ſhore (alluding to the Parabolical expreſſion of the day of judgement,* Mat. 13. 47, *&c*) *is damnable, and the ſin of* Schiſm, *which ſurpaſſeth all other crimes.* This is ſo home and punctual, that to quote any more will be ſuperfluous; neido I ſee, admitting the Holy Fathers Authority, what can rationally or ſatisfactorily be reply'd by our Adverſaries.

Epiſt. 48.

L. 2. cont. Ep. Parme.

But

But thirdly, the Church is *Catholique, reſpectu hominum ſaluandorum*; in reſpect that as many as are ſaved are called to be Members of it: Therefore 'tis ſaid *Acts* the 2. v. 47. *That there were added to the Church dayly ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.* And St. *Paul* tells us, *Quos prædeſtinavit, hos eſt vocavit*, &c. Whom God has predeſtinated to Grace and Glory from all eternity, thoſe he in time calls out of the World into the Congregation of the Faithful, (which is the proper notion of ἐκκλησία in the Original, from whence comes the word *Eccleſia*) that in the Communion of his *Catholick* Church they may make their calling and election ſure, by working out their election with fear and trembling. Teſtimonies of the Fathers in all Ages are very copious to this purpoſe. View a few of many. Rom. 8. 30.

*The Holy* Catholick *Church* (ſays St. *Gregory* the great) *teaches, that none can be ſaved except within her; affirming that none can be ſaved in anywiſe who are without her. Whoſoever* L. 14. Moral. ca. 2. Ep. 152. ad Donat.

(ſays St. *Auſtin*) *ſhall be ſeparated from this* Catholick *Church, how laudibly ſoever he thinks he lives, by this only wickedneſs in that he's divided from the unity of Chriſt, he ſhall not have life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* And again, *Being out of the Church, and divided from the collection of unity, and bond of charity, thou ſhouldſt be puniſh'd with eternal fire, though burn'd alive for the Name of Chriſt.* St. *Fulgentius* his Schollar hath the ſame, *l. de fide ad* Petrum, *ca.* 37, 38. St. *Cyprian's* words are little different. *Do they think* (ſays he) *Chriſt is amongſt them when they are aſſembled out of the Church of Chriſt? No, though they were drawn to torments and execution for the confeſſion of the Name of Chriſt, yet this pollution is not waſh'd away, no not with blood; this inexpiable and inexcuſable crime of* Schiſm *is not purged away, even by death it ſelf.* Which is no more then what they have learn'd from the great Doctor of the *Gentiles*, when he ſays, *Though I give all my ſubſtance to maintain the*

*De Unit. Eccl.* c. 19.

*De Un. Eccl.*

1 Cor 13. 1, 2 3.

*the poor, and though I give my body to be burn'd, and have not charity, it will profit me nothing.* And the reaſon is, becauſe 'tis a ſacrifice without charity, which *Schiſm* deſtroyeth. *For charity* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *no man tranſports out of the Church.*

Are not theſe loud Alarms in the ears of *Proteſtants*, and all other *Separatiſts*, to awaken them from their preſent *Lethargy*, and make them ſenſible of their ſad condition? Can they hear theſe terrible accents, and yet continue to deceive themſelves with the ſpecious Name of *Reformed Chriſtians*? While they are divided from the Communion of the *Catholick* Church, can their morally good Lives, their civil Converſation, their formal Piety without the power thereof, their Saint-like zeal, which in the preciſer ſort dazels the eyes of common People, who think all is gold that gliſters; Can any, or all of theſe ſave their precious and immortal Souls? No, they cannot; *For out of the* Catholick

*Church*

Epist. 48. cont. Donat. &c. *Church* (ſaith the ſame St. *Auſtin*) *they may have Faith, they may have Sacraments, they may have Scriptures, they may live laudably, they may do good works, they may ſuffer death it ſelf for the Name of Chriſt, all this they may do, and have, but out of the Church Salvation they cannot have.*

Thus the Ancient Church always taught, and we with them. And this all *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks* will ſadly find true without repentance. But God of his mercy make it work effectually on them, as it did on me, to bring them into the boſom of the *Catholick* Church. I will cloſe up this diſcourſe with that famous place of St. *Auſtin*, *Multa ſunt quæ in Eccleſiæ Catholicæ gremio me juſtiſſimè teneant. Tenet conſenſio populorum & gentium; tenet auctoritas miraculis inchoata, ſpe nutrita, charitate aucta, Vetuſtate firmata; tenet ab ipſa ſede* Petri *Apoſtoli, cui paſcendas oves ſuas poſt reſurrectionem, Dominus commendavit, uſq; ad præſentem Epiſcopatum ſuc-*

L. cont. Ep Fund. ca. 4.

*ſucceſſio ſacerdotum; tenet poſtremo ipſum Catholicæ nomen, quod non ſine cauſa inter tàm multas hæreſes ſic iſta Eccleſia ſola obtinuit, ut cum omnes hæretici ſe Catholicos dici velint, quærenti tamen peregrino alicui, ubi ad Catholicam conveniatur, nullus hæreticorum vel baſilicam ſuam vel domum audeat oſtendere. Iſta ergo tot tantaq; Chriſtiani nominis chariſſima vincula rectè hominem tenent credentem in Eccleſia Catholica, etiam ſi propter noſtræ intelligentiæ tarditatem, vel vitæ meritum, veritas nondum ſe apertiſſime oſtendat. Apud vos autem, ubi nihil horum eſt quod me invitet ac teneat, ſola perſonat veritatis pollicitatio.* Which is to this effect, *That the conſent of Nations, an Authority ſet up with Miracles, nouriſh'd with Hope, increas'd by Charity, eſtabliſh'd by Antiquity, the uninterrupted ſucceſſion of Prieſts in the Chair of* Peter *the Apoſtle to the preſent Biſhop; and laſtly, the very name of* Catholick *moſt juſtly kept him in the* Catholick *Church, while only the empty name of Truth did keep*

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*a noiſe and ratling among* Schiſmaticks, *wholly deſtitute of all theſe arguments to work upon a rational underſtanding.*

And let any man, who deſires ſincerely to follow Truth and ſave his Soul, judge, whether theſe motives which kept St. *Auſtin* in the boſome of the *Catholick* Church after his Converſion, ought not to convert him to become a Member of the ſame Church, and keep him in it.

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## SECT. VI.

### *Wherein the* Proteſtants *Plea of pretended Errors in the Church of* Rome, *to juſtify their Separation, is refuted.*

BUt they object further, that the Church not only may, but did err in points of Faith and Worſhip;

ſhip; and that they ſeparated not from the Church of *Rome*, but from her Errors and Corruptions, that they might not communicate with her in her ſins.

But certainly, whoever impartially conſiders what has been ſaid in the precedent, and ſome other *Sections* concerning the Churches Indefectibility can never think it poſſible that ſuch groſs errors and corruptions could invade the Church to her utter ruine.

The Church of Chriſt, which is the pillar and ground of Truth, (and could not be ſo, was ſhe her ſelf lyable to error in points of Faith) hath always been more Faithful in keeping the *Depoſitum* of the Goſpel intruſted to her inviolate, and unſpotted from all blemiſhes of corruption, which unreaſonable men, that is, *Schiſmaticks* and *Hereticks* have endeavoured by all means poſſible to introduce, thereby to defile the Virgin-purity of Chriſt's Spouſe; contending ſo earneſtly for the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints,

Saints, that in this Holy quarrel ſhe was ever very liberal of her deareſt blood, willing rather to undergo the greateſt tortures, then it ſhould ſuffer in the leaſt manner. Yea, ſo vigilant and eagle-ey'd hath ſhe been hitherto in the diſcharge of this important duty, that no Authority, Learning, or Sanctity of any perſon whatſoever could introduce the leaſt innovotion in Religion, without vigorous oppoſition and condemnation. As is evident in *Origen* and *Tertullian*, thoſe wonders of their times; to name no more, being a thing ſo obvious in Church Hiſtory. See *Vincentius Lyrin. ca.* 23, 24.

Moreover, all points of Chriſtian belief being taught and eſtabliſh'd in the Church by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and as ſuch conveyed down to us ever ſince that time, by Univerſal Tradition, and for the moſt part moſt viſible practice, as the *Sacrifice of the Maſs*, *Prayer for the Dead*, *Invocation of Saints*, &c. 'Tis altogether impoſſible the Church

Church ſhould fall into ſuch damnable errors as are imputed to her by our Adverſaries, except ſo many millions of Chriſtians, of different Nations and Languages, ſcatter'd over the face of the whole earth, ſhould to no purpoſe in ſome Age conſpire together to teach the World a palpable lye, in direct oppoſition to what they had received, and in matters whereon depend no leſs then the eternal Salvation of themſelves and Poſterity; a thing inconceivable to humane reaſon. But impoſſibilities clouded in plauſible terms ſhall be aſſerted for truths, before ſome men will confeſs themſelves *Schiſmaticks* in ſeparating from the *Roman* Church; and Infallibility muſt err, before they be condemn'd as erroneus, who yet confeſs themſelves Fallible.

But let us ſuppoſe (though it be not true) that the Church was lyable to errors in matters of Faith; can theſe men, who accuſe her to be erroneous, aſſure us that they err not in the accuſation? For being

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by their own confeſſions Fallible, that is, not certain whether what they affirm be true or no, unleſs they can evidence that thoſe are errors indeed which they lay to the Churches charge, no man can rationally believe them, ſeeing the publick judgment and atteſtation of the Church to the contrary is incomparably of far greater Authority, and will overpoiſe whatever amounts to leſs then demonſtration. And in all Juſtice, the right ought to be thought on the Governouts ſide, 'til the revolters from them, by producing cauſes ſufficient to juſtify the withdrawing of their obedience, make the contrary undeniably clear to every eye.

They are the accuſing Party, the Church defends her right; without a definitive Sentence can be no deciſion. What Judge will they therefore ſtand to in this Controverſy? We know they ought to ſubmit to the judgment and determination of the preſent Church, her voice being as it were the voice of God in declaring

claring what is of Faith, or not; and cannot but wonder that they will not alſo acknowledge it, when our Bleſſed Saviour ſays plainly of Church Governours, *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me, and who deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me.* And St. *Paul, He that deſpiſeth theſe things, deſpiſeth not man, but God, who hath alſo given to us of his Holy Spirit.* But becauſe by her they already are convicted and condemned, and therefore refuſe to ſtand to her determination, (as *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks* have done in all Ages) will they refer it to Antiquity, and let the Ancient Fathers give the Sentence? This they cannot rationally refuſe; neither in word (to make a flouriſh,) do ſome of the moſt Learned of the *Proteſtants*, but only pretend to reform the preſent Church, that they may conform to Antiquity, and uudertake to rectify the Church of *Rome* in points wherein ſhe hath forſaken her primitive purity.

Luke 10. 16.

1 Theſſ. 4. 8.

But they are at great variance and in diſorder amongſt one another, in that they cannot agree when Religion began to be adulterated, and when theſe errors crept into the Church. For being no leſs then damnable errors, as they pretend, in things practical and daily in uſe by ſo great a Body, and therefore notoriouſly viſible, and ſpeaking aloud their original, ſeeing they can aſſign no certain time (a task impoſſible, as we have before ſhewn) when firſt they were brought into the Church, 'tis an undeniable argument that they are not innovations, but of Apoſtolical practice and inſtitution: According to that famous Rule of St. *Auſtin*, *Quod ubiq; ab Eccleſia Catholica obſervatum eſt*, &c. *Whatever the* Catholick *Church obſerves in all places, if we find it to have been inſtituted by no General Council, we muſt believe it to have come from the Apoſtles themſelves to us by Tradition.*

Some of them allow the Spouſe of Chriſt to continue in her Virgin purity

purity for the firſt five or ſix hundred years, 'till the time of *Gregory* the great, that glorious Saint and *Pope*, ſo affectionate to our Countrey, and juſtly called our Apoſtle. Others think this confeſſion too liberal, and will have the Myſtery of Iniquity to begin ſooner, (which is true if underſtood of *Apoſtates* from the Chuch, not of the Church *Apoſtatizing*,) and ſo with them this defection from the Faith, by the mixture of *Antichriſtian* Doctrines and practices, muſt invade the Church immediately upon the firſt 300 years after Chriſt, or thereabouts, ſome maintaining this, others that *Pope* to be the *Antichriſt*; every one fancying a time, which they conceited moſt advantageous for their purpoſe. For after tryal finding that the Fathers of the firſt 600 years could not be admitted Judges in the Controverſy without a manifeſt condemnation of themſelves, they warily retreated within the firſt 300 years of Chriſt, which being times of hot and bloody per-

ſecution more or leſs, and little then written by the Fathers of the Church, they thought nothing conſiderable could be produced againſt them, within thoſe Ages for their condemnation in the preſent Controverſies not then ſtarted; or what was upon record, might eaſily ſome way or other be evaded. So that they will have the light of their new Goſpel to be tryed only by dark times, as to the deciſion of the preſent points; like *Litigants*, who will admit only of ſuch Witneſſes who can ſay little, or nothing to the cauſe in hand; and by all means will have thoſe debarr'd to ſpeak who can give ſufficient evidence againſt them. For no rational cauſe poſſibly can be given why they ſhould aſſign 6, or 5, or 300 years after Chriſt for the beginning of the *Apoſtacy* from the Faith, (as if Chriſt ſhould juſt then forget his promiſe of perpetual aſſiſtance and guidance of his Church into all Truth, or elſe not be able to perform it) more then any other time; but only they were reſolv'd, what they

they found those Doctrines and practices to be evidently asserted by the ancient Fathers which they condemn as Erroneous and Idolatrous, they would determine That to be the time when the Church grew rotten and corrupted. And so, after all their seeming veneration of Antiquity, the Ancient Fathers shall not be any Rule whereby to judge of their Faith and Worship; but their Faith and Worship shall be a Rule whereby to judge when the Fathers are, or are not erroneous, A sure way, I confess, for a new Religion.

But they cannot escape so neither without condemnation, & that even by their own confessions, so impossible it is for those who contradict Truth, not to contradict themselves also; and to confute themselves while they oppose her. For take the first 5, or 600 years after Christ to be the limits of primitive Purity, and 'tis manifest from their own Champions, that what they call errors, as just causes of their separation from the Church of *Rome*, are *Catholick* Verities.

Cont. 2. q. 5. c. 7. *'Tis true* (ſaith *Whitaker*,) *what* Calvin *and the* Centuriſts *have written, that the Ancient Church did err in many things, as touching* Limbo, Free-will, Merit of Works, *&c.*

Riot Briſt. pag. 36. *I confeſs* (ſaith *Tulk*) Hierom, Auſtin, Ambroſe, *&c. hold the* Invocation of Saints.

Exam. Con. Trid. p. 3. p. 2000. *Moſt of the Fathers* (ſaith *Kemnitius*) *did not diſpute, but avouch that the Souls of Martyrs heard the Petitions of thoſe who Prayed to them; they went to the Monuments of Martyrs, and invocated Martyrs by Name.*

De Noto. Col. 1559. *As long as we ſtand to Councils and Fathers, we ſhall remain always in the ſame Errors.* So *Peter Martyr*, Which words being indefinite, may as well involve the Councils and Fathers of the firſt 300 years, their utmoſt refuge in Antiquity, as after-Ages.

Defen. p. 473. But *Whitgift* an *Engliſh Proteſtant* Biſhop, put it out of all doubt; for he affirms, *That all the Biſhops and Learned Writers of the* Greek *and* Latin *Church too, for the moſt part were*

*wrre ſpotted with the Doctrines of* Free-will, Merit, Invocation of Saints.

*It was a cuſtom* (ſaith *Calvin*) 1300 *years ago to Pray for the Dead. But all of that time, I confeſs, were carried away into Error.* Which computed from the time he writ, muſt of neceſſity adulterate the Church in the days of her pre-acknowledg'd Purity. And *Dudidius* plainly acknowledges to his Brother *Beza*, *That if it be true which the Fathers have profeſs'd with mutual conſent, 'tis altogether on the* Papiſts *ſide.* What can we deſire more, as to the judgment of Antiquity, for our juſtification? *Inſt. l. 3. c. 5. para. 10.* *Apud* Bezam *Ep.* 1

Thus theſe men while they pretend only to forſake errors, and reform Religion, by cloathing the the Church, a new with the ſnowy garments of primitive purity, confeſs unawares, enough to condemn themſelves out of their own mouths, and flatly give the lye to what they produce for their juſtification. They flee to Antiquity to abſolve them;

from error, and yet accuſe the ſame Antiquity as erroneous. But while they thus condemn the whole Church, Councils, and Ancient Fathers of errors, certainly they could not intend that their own ſingle words ſhould be of any Authority, or deſerve to be credited by rational men. Who deſires more ſatisfaction in this particular, I refer him to that moſt excellent Treatiſe call'd, *The Proteſtants Apology for the Catholick Faith*; which in an argument *ad hominem* is unanſwerable, and plainly demonſtrates that *Proteſtants* muſt upon their own grounds either become *Catholicks*; or elſe confeſs that their Faith and practice is not the Faith and Practice of the Ancient Church. With whom to conſent, is, notwithſtanding the Plea of theſe men, to defend their ſeparation from the Church of *Rome* their *Catholick* Mother not to be *Schiſmatical.*

Some therefore ſeeing their Church not only to totter, but wholly to fall, while it pretends to ſtand

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on the legs of Antiquity, have with greater zeal, though with leſs reaſon, invented another way to juſtify their *Schiſm*; and will have no Authority at all attributed to the Fathers and Councils, the conſtant practice and Tradition of the Church, for deciſion of the preſent Controverſies; but affirm all things to be uncertain upon that ſcore, though never ſo plainly and unanimouſly aſſerted; and the Sacred Scripture independent on them, muſt be ſole judge, and give the deciſive Sentence by it ſelf. Which poſition (if made ſpeak out,) ſays thus much, that ſince the Apoſtles days there's not one ſufficient witneſs of what they taught the World to believe and practice as Chriſt inſtructed them; but that the Doctrine of the Church is to be brought to the touchſtone of Scripture by every one in particular, and after examination to be accounted counterfeit or true, accepted or refuſed, as fancy and private reaſon ſhall determine. For after theſe magnificent

cent pretences of their great veneration of Sacred Scripture, and deferring all to it, this is the up-shot, and their Faith is finally resolv'd into no safer Principle. A Position so wholly destructive of the certainty of Christian belief, so inconsistent with the majestick gravity of Religion, such a never-dying *Hydra* of *Schisms* and *Heresies*, that I know not what can make a surer way for *Atheism* to triumph over the ruines of *Christianity*. And had our Fore-Fathers been of this judgment and practice, doubtless before this time the Cross of Christ had not been the glory, but contempt of Nations.

Besides, methinks, they cannot but see, that while they flee to to Scripture as sole Judge in these Controversies, and deny all Church Tradition and Attestation, they thereby take away those Sacred Oracles of Divine Truth also; when 'tis confess'd by all who can pretend any right to reason, that there's no possible way for us to know undoubtedly what is the Word of God,

or

or not, but by the Tradition of the Church.

Moreover, if the written Word muſt be ſole Judge, ſeeing the Scriptures themſelves ſend them to the Church, obliging them to ſtand to her determination in ſuch Caſes (as is manifeſt by what hath been ſaid) are they not confounded upon their own grounds, and muſt obey the Churches deciſive Sentence in all Controverſies of Faith, or elſe deny to ſtand to Scripture? In ſuch inextricable waves do they miſerably looſe themſelves who obſtinately defend ſo bad a cauſe.

But if notwithſtanding theſe Paralogiſms and ſelf-contradictions, the Scriptures muſt ſtill be ſole Judge in the preſent controverted points, and they will have them to ſpeak for them againſt us; except it be ſo convincingly, that the Propoſitions by the very connexion of terms cannot be denyed without ſome implicancy, they are in as bad a caſe as they were before. For if the places produced are juſtly lyable to various

ous interpretations, can they think it reaſonable that their private gloſſes ſhould be preferred before the publick judgment of the Church, to whom we owe the Scriptures themſelves, and from whom we ought to receive as well the ſenſe of Scripture, when 'tis controverted as we do the Letter? I know in their popular diſcourſes they make fine flouriſhes, and after a long combat with pretended monſtruous errors of the Church of *Rome*, they clap their wings, and crow triumphantly upon their own dunghill, demanding of their deluded Auditory, whether the Church of *Rome* or Scripture is to be believ'd? This is their cuſtom, but 'tis not the queſtion. For let them produce but one ſentence out of thoſe Sacred Oracles of Truth, that in expreſs terms contradicts the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* in any one controverted point, for which they pretend juſt cauſe of ſeparation, and it would be ſomething to the purpoſe; but who can imagine that *Catholicks* who have taught the

the *Proteſtants* that the Scripture is God's word, ſhould themſelves in expreſs and poſitive terms deny the Doctrine of it.

And therefore ſeeing the queſtion is (if Scripture alone was to deſide the Controverſies) whether the ſenſe and meaning of the *Holy Ghoſt* in thoſe Sacred Writings, is to be taken upon the credit of Eccleſiaſtical Tradition, or new-born interpretations of ſome few private men; certainly none, except much overſway'd by paſſion or intereſt, can prefer the bare conjectures and probabilities of thoſe Interpreters before the evidence of ſuch Authority. Eſpecially the Scriptures themſelves witneſſing, *That things in them difficult to be underſtood, are wreſted by the unlearned and unſtable to their own deſtruction.* And the experience of all Ages making it evident, that the Interpretation of Scriptures by private Spirits in a ſenſe contrary to the atteſtation and practice of the Church, hath been the very ſource and fountain of all *Hereſies.* And in

2 Pet. 3. 15,16,17.

in such cases there's no possible way to be secured from seduction and falling into errors, but by firmly adhering to the Doctrine and Tradition of the Church. *Sine ego, sive quis alius*, &c. *If I, or any other* (saith *Vincentius Lyrinensis*) *will discover the frauds of new-born* Hereticks, *and shunning their snares abide sound and firm in the right belief, he must by the help of God fortify his Faith with a double bullwark; first the Authority of Divine Law, and then the Tradition of the* Catholick *Church. For Sacred Scriptures being lyable to such variety of Interpretions, that almost so many men, so many minds*; Novatian, Photinus, Sabellius, Donatus, Arius, Apollinaris, Belagius, Nestorius (Lutherans, Calvinists, Protestants, Anabaptists, Independents, Fanaticks, *&c.*) *every one pretending the Scriptures to stand for them according to their several glosses and expositions, of necessity to shun the Labyrinths of so many errors, we must follow the line of Apostolical Writings, as handed to us by the*

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ſenſe and Tradition of the Catholick Church.

And yet if we ſhould exclude the univerſal Tradition of the Church, with the undoubted Teſtimonies of Councils and Fathers of all Ages (by which *Proteſtants* ſtand convicted of *Schiſm* and *Hereſie* beyond all rational contradiction) from having any thing to do in the deciſion of theſe Controverſies, granting all that they deſire, let bare words of Scripture be taken according to the exacteſt Criticiſms of private reaſon, in the judgement of Learned and Un-intereſſed men, and even upon that ſcore thoſe Sacred Oracles of Divine Truth will caſt it clearly on the *Catholicks* ſide againſt our Adverſaries. And if they cannot be convinced from them to be *Heretical* in all material points of Faith wherein they differ from us, yet as much as concerns the formal part of *Schiſm* and *Hereſie*, they ſtand thereby as manifeſtly guilty of thoſe hainous ſins as ever any one who ſeparated from the Churches Doctrine and

and Communion; yea, and by *Proteſtants* themſelves condemn'd for *Hereticks*. But never any place hath been produced by them from the Scriptures againſt the Church in the preſent Controverſies, as to evidence her in any one point erroneous; But *Catholicks* have ſufficiently ſhown, that by ſuch endeavours they have troubled thoſe waters of Life with the mud of their corrupted fancies, and by injurious diſtortions forced them to ſpeak what never the Holy Ghoſt intended.

What remains therefore, but that *Proteſtants* acknowledging themſelves to be a Congregation Fallible and ſubject to error in points of Faith, confeſs alſo that they never afforded a more pregnant demonſtration of their Fallibility, than in aſſerting the *Catholick* Church to have erred, whereby their ſeparation from her Doctrine and Communion might be juſtified.

SECT.

## SECT. IV.

*Wherein the* Proteſtants *Plea, that the* Popes *Univerſal Paſtorſhip in an Uſurpation crept into the Church, and therefore might, and ought to be forſaken, without* Schiſm, *is refuted.*

YEt another Plea they have, that the *Popes* Univerſal Authority and Primacy over the Church is a meer Uſurpation and Tyrannical, and conſequently to oppoſe and expel the exerciſe of ſuch a Power out of *England*, or where ever elſe 'tis introduced, cannot be a *Schiſm*, but a Godly Reformntion, by reducing the Government of the Church to its primitive inſtitution, as founded by Chriſt and his Apoſtles. Theſe are fine ſpecious words,

and will be found nothing elſe in their due examination.

For it being of Faith in the *Catholick* Church, that a Primacy or Supreme Juriſdiction in Eccleſiaſtical matters over the Univerſal Body of Chriſtianity in St. *Peter* and his Succeſſors, (the Biſhops of *Rome*) is of Divine Inſtitution, and maintain'd by her, as ſo taught, and practic'd in all Ages; yea, and the *Popes* being in peaceable poſſeſſion of ſuch an Authority in *England* for about 1000 years by confeſſion of *Proteſtants* themſelves, (being a thing not to be denyed, as notoriouſly evident from unqueſtionable Records in Church affairs) to deny ſuch an Authority to be lawful, and thereupon to withdraw their obedience from ſuch a Government, without any more adoe, declares them *Schiſmaticks*, unleſs firſt by rigorous demonſtration they prove it to be a meer uſurpation. For 'tis not abus'd Scripture, much leſs other Teſtimonies either juſtly ſuſpected or wreſted to their purpoſe, that can

can weigh any thing againſt the ſelf-proof of ſo long a continued poſſeſſion; the like to which cannot be ſhown by any Authority upon Earth, to fortify their right againſt oppoſers. I ſay, nothing but rigorous demonſtration will ſerve their turn in this caſe, which no preſcription can evacuate.

But when the *Papal* Authority was firſt caſt out of *England*, God knows, they were thinking on other matters; Luſt and Self-intereſt had quite blinded the eye of reaſon in King *Henry* the *8th.* and his flatterers, reſolving firſt upon the fact, and then endeavouring to maintain it juſt and lawful. But with ſuch weak Arguments as may be ſtrong proofs to induce all un-intereſted Souls to believe the contrary; though indeed the ſtrength of our evidence againſt them needs no help from the feebleneſs of their defences. However thus liberal they are to us againſt their wills.

No cauſe actually working, can but produce effects correſpondent

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to the nature of its activity: No man can deny this, but he muſt deny his reaſon. If therefore the *Pope*'s Supremacy over the Univerſal Church was introduced by Tyranny and Corruption, 'tis morally impoſſible that ſuch novelty as an univerſal Uſurpation in matters of the higheſt concern ſhould inſenſibly creep into the Church without diſcovery, and invade the whole Chriſtian World without oppoſition, and this too in producing notoriouſly viſible effects, which neceſſarily muſt accompany ſuch an innovation. Doubtleſs ſuch a change in a matter of pretended Divine Inſtitution, would have made a ſtrange clamour and confuſion in the Chriſtian World. One may as well maintain, that the bloody alterations of Government in our Iſland, have crept into the Nation, and after the ſad miſeries of ſo long a war leaving behind it evidences to every eye, no man can tell how, or be ſenſible when, and in what manner thoſe grand mutations hap'ned. Yea, this

this might be defended with more ſhow of reaſon, thoſe alterations being in Temporal matters, acted in a corner of the World, and therefore more eaſily brought about with leſſer noiſe and better ſtifled in their birth, that they might not be tranſmitted to poſterity, then this uſurpation in a Spiritual Government, founded by Chriſt himſelf to continue for ever, over all the Nations of the Earth, in thoſe things which concern the eternal Salvation of their Souls.

Thoſe reverend Witneſſes of our Ancient Faith the Holy Fathers, who were ſo tenacious and careful of Chriſtian Cuſtoms, and the Doctrine once deliver'd to the Saints, that they have exactly obſerv'd and regiſter'd in the leaſt innovations of Faith or practice which new Teachers would have brought into the Church, and were always more ready to part with their lives than any one point of their Religion, would they have quietly ſuffered the Government of the Church

(the ſole Conſerver of its Doctrine) inſtituted by Chriſt himſelf to be changed, and not generally complain, contradict, oppoſe, regiſter and publiſh it to the whole World, that they might know it to be a uſurpation, a ſpurious iſſue, no plant of our Heavenly Fathers planting, and therefore to be abominated and rooted out? It is incredible, that they who were ſo eagle-ey'd to obſerve, and eager to contradict matters of far leſs moment; ſhould in a buſineſs of ſuch concernment be wholly ſilent and betray the Truth. For if they have declar'd the Biſhop of *Rome*'s ſupreme Power and Juriſdiction in Gods Church, as Succeſſor to St. *Peter* in his Primacy, to be an uſurp'd Authority and of humane invention, and as ſuch oppos'd it; let them ſhow it out of their Writings, that we may know when, by whom, and by what means 'twas introduced into the Church, ſo as to invade the whole Body of Chriſtianity. And if they cannot, as moſt certainly they cannot

not, (having labour'd in vain to do't for above these 100 years, and their own differences about the time, when 'twas first brought in, being a manifest proof, it can never be assigned, and confess'd so by the most ingenuous among them) seeing 'tis a Government that hath been in quiet possession of the Christian World time out of mind, with a belief of its divine institution, handed as such to us by Universal Tradition, unless they will divest themselves of reason, they cannot but acknowledge, that, *ab initio fuit sic*, 'tis as old as Christian Religion; and all those *Schismaticks* who disobey so Sacred a Power under the pretence of usurpation.

The Divine Right of the *Pope*'s Supremacy in Spiritual matters being thus vindicated, those pretences of a Godly Reformation, and reducing Church Government to its Primitive Institution, fall to nothing of themselves; what they call Reformation being a violent usurpation of anothers right, and upon

what Motives, is too notorious to be justified.

'Twere much to be wish'd, they would lay to heart how in the late Revolutions by Gods most remarkable judgments on them, those very weapons which they us'd against *Papal* Power have been taken up by the *Presbyterians*, to the ruine and extirpation of *Epoſcopacy* for some time: And those *Zealots* in the same sort as handsomely cudgell'd by the *Independants*, all equally pretending a Godly Reformation, and reducing Religion to its primitive Purity.

Here I might conclude this Motive of my Conversion (wherein I have been very large, because *Schism* being a matter of fact is more discernable by ordinary capacities, than disputes of things more abstracted from sense, and consequently it is more easie to discover to all *Seperatists* the danger of their condition, that they may return to *Catholick* unity) especially considering the proof wholly lyes on our Adversaries

ſaries ſide, to demonſtrate ſo long a continued Government as the *Pope*'s Primacy over the *Catholick* Church to be a meer Tyrannical Uſurpation; or elſe to ſtand unanſwerably convicted of *Schiſm* for renouncing ſuch an Authority, evidenced unto us by Univerſal Tradition, which is our tenure in points of Faith. However, in that many poor Souls not knowing, or not conſidering the ſtrength of univerſal practice and immemorial poſſeſſion on the *Catholicks* ſide, are ſtill ſeduced and kept in error by ſome places gleaned here and there from Sacred Scripture, and the Writings of Antiquity wreſt'd to their purpoſe, that they may evidently ſee that all ſuch verbal proofs from dead Letters are made to ſpeak what the Authors never intended; I ſhall, *ex abundante*, to give them all poſſible ſatisfaction in a matter of ſo great conſequence, produce ſuch clear Teſtimonies from undoubted Records of Antiquity, ſpeaking the Faith and practice of the primitive Church

Church in the point of the *Pope's* Supremacy, to be the ſame with the new preſent Church of *Rome*, that more cannot be required by men of Reaſon.

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## SECT. VIII.

*Wherein the* Pope's *Univerſal Power and Supreme Juriſdiction in Gods Church is farther manifeſted, and made good from* Councils *and the verdict of Ancient Fathers, grounded on Sacred Scriptures.*

WE holding St. *Peter* to be conſtituted by Chriſt himſelf the Head and Prince of the Apoſtles, that is, to have a Supreme Power and Juriſdiction in Gods Church peculiarly entruſted to him, and the *Pope's* univerſal Paſtorſhip to

to be founded on the Primacy of St. *Peter* as his Succeſſors; the Teſtimonies we are producing, muſt make good too things.

Firſt, that the Ancient Church believed St. *Peter* to be Prince of the Apoſtles, and Head of the Univerſal Church.

Secondly, the Biſhops of *Rome* ſucceed him in that Authority and Juriſdiction.

Here the Fathers firſt declare their belief in theſe particulars. I begin with *Anacletus* Pope and Martyr immediately after the firſt Century, ſpeaking the very words of the preſent Church, *Hæc Sacroſancta Romana*, &c. *This Holy, and* Roman, *and Apoſtolical Chair hath obtained the Primacy, and eminency of Power over all Churches and the whole Congregation of Chriſtian People, not from the Apoſtles, but from our Lord and Saviour, as he ſaid to Bleſſed* Peter *the Apoſtle*, Thou art *Peter*, and upon this rock will I build my Church.

*Ann.* 101. *Epiſt.* 3. *ad omnes Epiſt.*

*Julius* the first of that Name in the *Roman* Chair, writing to the Bishops of the *East* in behalf of St. *Athanasius*, that invincible Bullwark for the *Catholick* Faith against the *Arrians*, is no less express and punctual to our purpose, *Sicut B.* Petrus *Apostles*, &c. *As Blessed* Peter *was chief of the Apostles, so the* Roman *Church consecrated in his Name, by our Lords institution was first and Head of the rest; and all great Churches and Assemblies of Bishops should have recourse to her as to the Mother Church and Supreme.* I have put these too together, because *Popes*, which cannot derogate from their Authority, our Adversaries having nothing justly to say against them.

*Cent. 4. Ep. ad ori. Epis.*

St. *Irenæus* surely was no *Protestant* in this point; affirming, *The most ancient known Church to all men, founded and establish'd at* Rome *by the two most famous Apostles* Peter *and* Paul, *brought down by succession of Bishops to his time, to be that Church to which by reason of its more powerful*

*L. 3. cont. hær. c. 13.*

*powerful principality, every Church, that is, all the Faithful over the World ought to reſort.*

*Tertullian* calls St. *Peter*, *The Rock of the Church, and the Biſhop of* Rome *the High Prieſt, and Biſhop of Biſhops.* *In præſer. c. 22, 36.*

*Origen* is clear, *When* (ſays he) *the chief charge of feeding Chriſts ſheep was given to* Peter, *and the Church founded upon him*, &c. *There was required of him the confeſſion of no Virtue, but Charity.* Relating to that place in the 21 of St. *John's* Goſpel, where is deſcribed, when and how our Bleſſed Saviour inveſted him with this Supreme Paſtorſhip and Juriſdiction. *In ca. 6. Ep. ad Roma.*

*We*, (ſaith St. *Cyprian*, as the mouth of the Church,) *hold Peter in the Head and Root of the Church*, But that famous place elſewhere is more full and convincing. *The enemy perceiving his Idols to be forſaken, and his Temples to be deſerted by the multitude of Believers, invented a new deceit to gull the unwary by the name of Chriſtian, raiſing* Hereſies *and* *Epiſt. ad* *De Unit. Eccleſ.*

*Schiſmes*

Schiſmes *to corrupt Verity and ſubvert Faith. This is, O Brethren, becauſe we have not recourſe to the Origen, nor ſeek to the Head. Which if we would conſider and examine, there would need no long Treatiſe, nor many arguments to find out the Truth. Our Lord ſaid to* Peter, Thou art *Peter*, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it. *And again, after reſurrection, ſaying,* As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you, *&c. Yet to manifeſt unity, he conſtituted one Chair, and by his Authority he diſpos'd the Origen of that Unity to begin from one. The reſt of the Apoſtles were that which* Peter *was, the Primacy was given to* Peter, *that the Church of Chriſt might appear to be one, and one Chair.*

John 20. 21, *&c.*

Here are couch'd many things remarkable. Firſt, That all *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks* are not true Members of the *Catholick* Church, but meer nominal Chriſtians.

Secondly, that *Hereſie* and *Schiſm* in their own nature are as damning ſins

ſins as flat Idolatry, being Satan's new-invented ſnare to catch poor Souls, and his utmoſt endeavours to keep up his tottering Kingdom after the promulgation of the Goſpel to all Nations.

Thirdly, That unwary Souls are only taken by theſe ginns of the Enemy, who have not recourſe to the Viſible Head of the Church, in communion with whom Truth is only to be found.

Fourthly, That St. *Peter* is this viſible Head of the Church, conſtituted by Chriſt himſelf; firſt by Promiſe, afterwards by Commiſſion. The Promiſe, *Thou art* Peter, *and upon this rock will I build my Church, unto thee will I give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* The Commiſſion, *Feed my Lambs, feed my Sheep*; Being words ſpoken to St. *Peter*, and no other Apoſtle. Mat. 16. Joh. 21.

Fifthly, To prevent an Objection, that they were all Apoſtles as well as *Peter*, and therefore equal in Authority, he grants they were equal in the Apoſtleſhip as much as con-

concerns an illimited Power and Commiſſion to Preach the Goſpel to all Nations, and ſo they were all foundations of the Church. But St. *Peter* in a more peculiar and eminent manner was a rock on which the Church was founded, in as much as he was made their Head, and ſupreme Paſtor of the Faithful.

To whom St. *Hierom* wholly accords, affirming, *That although all the Apoſtles were alike in Apoſtleſhip, yet Chriſt for the better keeping of Unity and Truth would have one to be Head of them all; that a Head being once conſtituted, occaſion of* Schiſm *might be taken away.* Neither is he leſs punctual in aſſerting the Biſhop of *Rome* to ſucceed *Peter* in this Primacy, writing thus to Pope *Damaſus*, *Ego Beatudini tuæ, id eſt, Cathedræ* Petri *communione conſocior*, &c. *I am joyn'd in Communion with your Holineſs, that is, the Chair of* Peter; *I know the Church is built upon that rock; whoſoever eates the Lamb out of his Family, is a Prophane perſon. Whoſoever is not in* Noah's *Ark, periſhes in the flood.* Ask

*L. 1. adv. Jouin. c. 14.*

*Ep. 57, & 58.*

Ask St. *Auſtin* his Faith in this point, and he tells us, *The Primacy among the Apoſtles by ſpecial grace is pre-eminent in St.* Peter. And elſewhere he calls St. *Peter, The Head of the Apoſtles, the Gate-keeper of Heaven, and the foundation of the Church.* And what he believ'd concerning the Power of his Succeſſors is evident by theſe words, *Sedenti in Cathedra Romanæ Eccleſiæ,* &c. *The whole Chriſtian World in the tranſmarine and remoteſt parts of the Earth, is ſubject to him who ſits in the Chair of the* Roman *Church.*

*Tract. 56. in Joha.*

*Ep. 86.*

*Ep. 162.*

St. *Gregory* alſo aſſures us, that he knows no Biſhop but is ſubject to the See Apoſtolick. *And that the care and Principality of the Church hath been committed to St.* Peter *the Prince of the Apoſtles, and yet he is not called Univerſal Apoſtle.* That is, as if there was no other Apoſtle but He. Thus vindicating the ſupreme juriſdiction and Primacy of the *Roman* Biſhop as St. *Peter*'s Succeſſor againſt *John* the proud Patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, arrogating to him-

*L. 4. Epiſt. 32. Ep. ad Maurit.*

himſelf the Title of Univerſal Biſhop in a ſenſe contrary to the Doctrine and practice of the *Catholick* Church.

To cite more at large would be tedious; but to theſe might be added the Epiſtle of St. *Marcellus* Pope and Martyr to the Biſhops of the Province of *Antioch*, concerning the Primacy of the Chair of *Rome*. *Leo* the great *Ser.* 3. *Anniv. Aſſump. & Ser.* 2. *in Nat. S.* Petri. *& Epiſt.* 89. *S.* Athana. *Ep. ad Fælicem. S.* Ambr. *in ca.* 2. *ad Galatas. & l.* 6. *ad* Lucam *c:* 2. *S.* Epipha. *hær.* 51. *S.* Chryſoſt. *Hom.* 55. *in Matt. Optatus Milevit. l.* 2. *cont. Parm.* Fulgentius *de Incar. & gratia c.* 11. *Proſp. l.* 2. *de Voca. Gentium ca.* 6. Euſeb. *Ep.* 3. *Campaniæ*, &c. And many others, but theſe may ſuffice.

This harmony we find among the Ancient Fathers concerning the ſupreme Paſtorſhip and Juriſdiction of St. *Peter* and his Succeſſors the Biſhops of *Rome*, while they ſpeak ſeverally in their Writings. Let us now hear them ſpeak united in General Councils, the moſt Sacred and

Su-

Supreme Judicature that is on Earth in things that concern our Eternal Happineſs.

The General Council at *Florence* declares the Faith of the *Catholick* Church in theſe words, *Definimus S. Apoſtolicam Sedem*, &c. *We define that the Holy Apoſtolick Chair and* Pope *of* Rome, *hath Primacy over the whole World; and that the ſaid* Pope *of* Rome *is Succeſſor to S.* Peter *Prince of the Apoſtles, and true Vicar of Chriſt, and Head of the Univerſal Church, and Father and Paſtor of all Chriſtians; and that full Power was given to B.* Peter *by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to feed, rule and govern the Univerſal Church, as is contain'd in the Sacred Canons of Oecumenical Councils.* Which though celebrated but 400 years ſince and upwards, yet I firſt produced it, becauſe not only ſubſcribed by the *Latine* Fathers, but by the *Greek* Church alſo, and taken out of more Ancient Councils, as the words expreſs, and former Acts make good. *Ann. Ch.* 1234.

*Ann. Ch.* 325. For in the first General Council at *Nicæa*, so famous for Anathematizing the *Arrian Heresie*, it was defined, *That who holds the See of* Rome *is the Head and Chief of the Patriarchs, seeing he's the first, as* Peter *to whom Power is given over all Christian Princes, and all their People, as he who is Vicar of Christ our Lord over all People and the Universal Church of Christ.*

*Ann. Ch.* 451. *Act.* 16. The General Council of *Chalcedon* consisting of above 600 Fathers, after mature deliberation, declare, *That all Primacy and Chief Honour, according to the Canons, is to be kept for the Archbishop of old* Rome. Which is not so to be understood, as if the Sacred Constitutions of General Councils first gave this Supreme Authority to the *Roman* Bishop, but upon several occasions the Councils defin'd this Supremacy of Jurisdiction to belong of right to the Bishop of *Rome* by Divine Institution. Else how could the sixth Canon of the first General *Nicene* Council say, *Ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum*,

*matum, The Church of* Rome *always had the Primacy.* And by what tenure ſhe held it in their judgments, is manifeſted in the Preface of the ſaid Council in theſe words, *Eccleſia Romana*, &c. *The Church of* Rome *by no Synodical Decrees was ſet over the reſt, but by the Evangelical voice of our Lord and Saviour obtain'd the Primacy.* And in the ſecond Seſſion of this Council of *Chalcedon*, after the Epiſtle of *Leo* the great then *Pope* to the Fathers was publickly read, confirming the *Nicene Creed* againſt the *Arrians*, there aroſe an unanimous acclamation, *Hæc Patrum fides Apoſtolorum fides*, &c. *This Faith of the Fathers is the Faith of the Apoſtles, we all believe ſo, all Orthodoxal believe ſo; let him be accurſed who believes not ſo.* Peter *hath ſpoke by* Leo, *&c.* Which laſt words ſignify nothing, if they had not believ'd *Leo* then Biſhop of the *Roman* and Apoſtolical Chair to ſucceed St. *Peter* in his Faith and Juriſdiction. I am ſure the ſame *Leo* believed ſo, when he tells us,

Ser. 3. Anniu. Assump.

*That our Bleſſed Saviour ſaid only to St.* Peter, *I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not. And choſe him alone of all the World to be ſet over the vocation of all Nations, and all the Apoſtles, and all the Fathers of the Church, by a peculiar Commiſſion to feed and govern his whole flock.*

Beſides, in the third Seſſion they ſtile him, *Univerſal Archbiſhop and Patriarch of old* Rome; and afterwards give ſentence againſt *Dioſcorus* in the name of *Leo* and St. *Peter*, to acknowledge and teſtify thereby that they believ'd him to ſucceed St. *Peter* in his Univerſal Paſtorſhip. Which Title of Univerſal Biſhop, though St. *Gregory* the great out of Humility refuſes, as not uſed by his Predeceſſors, and bitterly inveighs againſt it in that ſenſe, the then Patriarch of *Conſtantinople* did proudly arrogate it to himſelf: Yet 'tis moſt certain and evident from the ſame Epiſtles, he did maintain it to belong by Divine right to the Biſhops of *Rome* as St. *Peter*'s Succeſſors, that very Supremacy and Juriſdiction in Gods

L. 4. Ep. Ep. 31, 34. L. 7. Epiſt. 30.

Gods Church, which all *Catholicks* now attribute to the Apoſtolical Chair. And whoever confeſſes the thing, we will not quarrel with him about the Name. If our Adverſaries will aſſert with St. *Gregory*, *That the care of the whole Church is committed by our Lord himſelf to* Peter *the Prince of the Apoſtles. That the* Roman *and Apoſtolical See is Head of all Churches. That all Biſhops found in fault are ſubject to it:* We ſhall not much preſs him to call the *Pope* of *Rome* Univerſal Biſhop; neither ought he in that ſenſe which St. *Gregory* condemned. And indeed the uſual ſtile of the Church is not to call the *Pope* Univerſal Biſhop, but Biſhop of the Univerſal Church.

*L. 4. Ep. Ep. 32. L. 11. ca. 54. L. 7. Ep. Ep. 63.*

More may be ſeen to this point in the Letters of the ſaid Council to the ſame Glorious Pope *Leo*. And in the firſt Act of the Council of *Conſtantinople* under *Menas*, they addreſs themſelves to *Pope Agapetus* in theſe words, *To our moſt Holy and moſt Bleſſed Lord Archbiſhop of old* Rome, *and Oecumenical Biſhop.* To

which may be added *Conc.* Sardicenſe *Gener. ca.* 3. *Synod.* Rom. *ſub* Sylveſtro *ca.* 20. *Conc.* Tolet. 1 *ſub finem aſſertionis fidei. Conc.* Milet. *ad* Innocent. *Papam, ejuſq; reſponſum, Conc.* Turon. *ca.* 21. *Conc.* Afric. *ca.* 15. *ad Papam*, Celeſtinum, *Syno.* Rom. 4. *ca.* 3. *Conc.* Bracanſe *primum ca.* 23. *Conc.* Aurelian 4. *ca.* 1. *&c.* with many more, which none ver'ſt in the Acts of *Eccleſiaſtical* Synods can be ignorant of; and theſe may ſuffice being ſo full and punctual to the purpoſe.

If to theſe Teſtimonies ſo undeniably aſſerting the *Popes* Supremacy over the whole Church we ſhould add univerſal practice, which from undoubted Records would appear by the *Popes* calling of General Councils, preſiding in them perſonally, or by their Legates, confirming their Acts; by Appeals to the Apoſtolical Chair from all parts of the Chriſtian World in Eccleſiaſtical Cauſes, by determining Controverſies, reforming Abuſes, by inveſtiture of Biſhops, Depoſitions, Cenſures,

ſures, erecting new Sees, Converſion of Nations by Apoſtolical men, and in particular of our Nation by St. *Auſtin* and his Fellow Monks ſent hither by St. *Gregory* the Great, and in a word, by their Authoritative ordering and care over all the Churches of the Chriſtian world; the proſecution of theſe particulars would ſwell whole Volumes, and therefore not here to be undertaken. But by what has been ſaid 'tis apparently manifeſt that our Adverſaries herein cannot be of a different Faith from us, but they muſt alſo forſake the Ancient Church. *Ann. Ch.* 596.

Now the places of a Sacred Writ by which the Ancient Fathers uſually prove their Belief in this point, are principally two; our Saviours words to St. *Peter*, *I ſay unto thee, thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it: And I will give unto thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven*, &c. The other *John* the 21. 15, 16, 17. verſes, *Jeſus ſaid to* Simon Peter, Simon Mat. 16. 18.

*Son*

*Son of* Jona, *loveſt thou me more then theſe? He ſaid unto him, yea Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee. He ſaid unto him, feed my Lambs. He ſaid to him the ſecoud time,* Simon *Son of* Jona *loveſt thou me? He ſaid to him, yea Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee. He ſaid to him again, feed my Lambs. Hee ſaith to him the third time,* Simon *Son of* Jonas, *loveſt thou me?* Peter *was ſorry that he ſaid unto him the third time, loveſt thou me? and ſaid unto him, Lord thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee. Jeſus ſaid unto him, feed my Sheep.* Theſe I ſay, are the principal Scriptures which the Ancient Fathers make uſe of to prove St. *Peters* ſupreme Juriſdiction in Gods Church, and his Succeſſors the Biſhops of *Rome*; as may be ſeen by moſt of the Teſtimonies before alleadged, and might be ſhown by many more. I ſhall produce but two or three.

*Ecce clavis regni cæleſtis*, &c. *Behold,* Peter *received the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, power of binding*

*ing and looſing is given to him: The care and government of the whole Church is committed to him*; Are St. *Gregory*'s words relating to theſe Texts, and vindicating the Primacy of St. *Peter* and his Succeſſors the Popes of *Rome*; as may be ſeen at large in his Epiſtle to the Emperor *Maritius*. *L. 4. Ep. Ep. 32.*

*Petra dicitur Petrus*, &c. Peter *is called a rock*, ſaith St. *Ambroſe*, *becauſe as a ſtone immoveable he bears up the compacted body of the whole Chriſtian Fabrick*. Though 'tis not denyed but the Ancient Fathers ſometimes take this rock to be St. *Peter*'s Faith, whereof he had then newly made confeſſion; however more unanimouſly they expound this Rock to be St. *Peter*'s Perſon as Head and Paſtor of all the Faithful. But never underſtood it of St. *Peter*'s Faith as ſeparated from his perſon. So the *Rhemiſh Teſtament*, *Madonate*, &c. upon the place do aſſure us. *Ser. 47.*

As for the Text in St. *John* hear *Euſebius Emiſſenus* expound it, *Our Lord* *De [illegible] S. Joan.*

*Lord first committed his Lambs, and then his Sheep to* Peter, *because he made him not only a Paſtor, but the Paſtor of Paſtors. He's therefore the Paſtor of all, for beſides Lambs and Sheep there's nothing in the Church.* And though *Proteſtants* will not ſee it, yet St. *Gregory* ſays, *'Tis plain to all that read the Goſpel, that from our Lords own mouth the charge of the whole Church was deliver'd to* Peter *Prince of the Apoſtles.* Inſomuch that as *Maldonate* hath obſerv'd upon the place, there was never any Father, *Greek* or *Latine*, who ever underſtood or expounded it in a contrary ſenſe.

So then Scripture-grounds the Ancient Fathers had for their belief in this point. Upon which Scriptures notwithſtanding they did not rely as barely conſider'd in themſelves, but as ſo expounded by the univerſal Practice and Tradition of the Church, the only Infallible Interpreter of the written Word, and unerring Rule of *Catholick* Faith. Which being apply'd to theſe Sacred

cred Texts, make them ſpeak clearly our belief to any Impartial underſtanding; and therefore conſidering the Fathers Faith and practice, they could not be lyable from them to other Interpretations. Of which this is a manifeſt Argument, in that they firſt of all began to expound them otherwiſe, who deny St. *Peter's* and the *Pope's* Supremacy.

Which yet they cannot do without much injury to the Sacred Texts upon their own grounds. For if, abſtracted from Church-tradition and practice, they be with all their circumſtances impartially weighed in the baliance of reaſon, they very much declare a peculiar power intruſted to St. *Peter* in the Oeconomy of the Church, not at all imparted to the reſt of the Apoſtles.

For here's a promiſe of the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven made to St. *Peter* alone, though the reſt were preſent; *I will give unto thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind*, &c. And this ſingular promiſe is uſher'd

in

in with ſingular circumſtances, all relating ſolely to St. *Peter*. For upon our Saviours interrogation, *Peter* making an expreſs Confeſſion of his Faith in theſe words, *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God*; our Lord gives him in particular a ſolemn Benediction, ſaying, *Bleſſed art thou* Simon Bar-Jona, *and I ſay unto thee, thou art* Peter, Et ſupra hanc *Petram*, alluding to his name (the very name our Bleſſed Saviour gave him when he choſe him to be an Apoſtle; and 'tis remarkable, that having immediately before called him *Simon*, he now calls him *Peter*, which ſignifies a *Rock*, of which no reaſon can well be given, but that the alluſion to this name of his by the next words might let him and the reſt underſtand, that he was the perſon deſign'd, upon whom, as upon a Rock, the Church ſhould be founded in a peculiar manner) *and upon this Rock will I build my Church.* And then follows, *I will give unto thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven*, &c. Now put them together,

1 Joh. 42.

and

and ſum them up, *Bleſſed art thou* Simon; *I ſay unto thee thou art* Peter, Et ſuper hanc *Petram*, *I will build my Church, I will give unto thee the Keyes*, &c. Doubtleſs all theſe particularities concerning *Peter*, and none elſe of the Apoſtles, though all were preſent, muſt in all reaſon amount to thus much, *That St:* Peter *was to be inveſted with ſome eminent Authority over all the reſt.*

And as St. *Peter* had good grounds from theſe particularizing circumſtances ſolely, relating to himſelf, upon ſo ſolemn a promiſe, to believe and expect that it would be fullfill'd, when the time deſign'd for it by Divine Wiſdom was fully come, by the collation of ſome extraordinary power peculiar to himſelf: So we find in the other fore-quoted Texts, that Truth it ſelf was as good as his word, expreſly and by name iutruſting to St. *Peter* the Charge and Government of the Univerſal Church, by a Commiſſion repeated thrice, for the greater certainty that the promiſe before made, Joh. 21.

was

was hereby fulfill'd; and withall to leave a greater impreſſion in his mind of the dignity and difficulty of the Supreme Office and Paſtorſhip, wherewith he only now actually was inveſted.

'Tis frivolous to ſay they are but admonitory expreſſions to mind St. *Peter* of his duty in doing the work of an Apoſtle, when the words carry as much in their face, an Authoritative Commiſſion, as; *Go teach all Nations*, ſpoken elſewhere to all the Apoſtles. Let them give any convincing reaſon why, *Feed my Lambs, Feed my Sheep*, ſpoken by the fountain of all Juriſdiction to an Apoſtle, ſhould not be an Authoritative Commiſſion, as well as, *Go teach all Nations?* Beſides, had they only been admonitory words to excite St. *Peter* to the work of his Apoſtleſhip, they would have been as neceſſary to have been ſpoken to all the reſt as to him, who were equally Apoſtles with him; and therefore not now minded of their duty, becauſe afterwards they were all to receive

Matt. 28.

Power

power from above by the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, for the performance of that great and glorious work.

So then being a Commiſſion, and only given to St. *Peter*, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that he was thereby inveſted with ſome Spiritual Authority which the other Apoſtles had not, though all Apoſtles. And the queſtion put to St. *Peter* by our Bleſſed Saviour immediately before the words of his Commiſſion, have no ſmall influence to prove a Superiority of Power to be inſtated upon Him above the reſt. For being asked, Simon *Son of* Jonas *loveſt thou me more than theſe?* Thoſe words of command *Feed my Lambs*, *Feed my Sheep*, do not correſpond, nor are at all emphatical, as what follows relates to them, if thereby no Authority more, or above the reſt, was not imparted to him as a reward of his extraordinary affection, in that he loved our Lord and Saviour more then the reſt of the Apoſtles. Moreover, in ſhort, as St. *Pe-*

*ter* did profeſs his Faith before the reſt, when this ſupreme Authority was promiſ'd to him, ſo now our Saviour would have him profeſs his love eſpecially above the reſt, when he conferr'd upon him this Juriſdiction.

Thus if theſe places be expounded according to the light of preſent circumſtances, in all reaſon Scripture makes for a Supremacy in *Peter* above the reſt of the Apoſtles. And (as hath been ſhown) the Ancient Fathers from theſe Texts unanimouſly aſſert, *That the Church was in a ſpecial manner founded on* St. *Peter, in being conſtituted Univerſal Head and Paſtor of it.* To which, if we add the voice of the preſent Church atteſting it to be a Univerſal Tradition, handed to her as ſuch from Age to Age, the unerring Rule of *Catholick* Faith, it amounts to an Infallible certainty, and puts the queſtion out of all queſtion and further diſpute. And how unſafe it is, and dangerous, to forſake the direct Texts of Scripture, the con-

the conſtant interpretations of the Ancient Fathers, and the conſent of the whole Chriſtian World, in matters of the higheſt concernment, and to rely upon the bare Authority of private and new-invented gloſſes of a few intereſſed and confeſſedly Fallible Doctors, or our own more vain preſumptions, let any ſober-minded man be judge.

And whether the *Proteſtant* Church of *England* in ſeparating from her *Catholick* Mother, the Church of *Rome*, can poſſibly be upheld from falling into formal and notorious *Schiſm*, leaning only on ſuch unſtable grounds.

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## *The fourth Motive.*

That the many *Miracles* God hath ben pleaſed to work in the *Roman Catholick* Church, and ſtill continues to do more or leſs; and in no other Communion divided from her, are manifeſt proofs that ſhe's the true Church: And thoſe *Miracles* which in a ſpecial manner regard ſome Doctrines denyed by *Proteſtants* to come from God, are Divine Teſtimonies that the ſaid Doctrines are as well Heavenly Truths as others, taught by the Church, are confeſs'd to be ſo.

SECT.

## SECT. I.

### *A Preliminary Diſcourſe.*

IT being manifeſt by what hath been diſcuſs'd in the precedent *Motive*, that the *Proteſtant* Church of *England* is undeniably guilty of *Hereſie* and *Schiſm* in a high manner, by their wilful ſeparation from the Church of *Rome* in Faith and Government; and thereupon the univerſality and perpetual viſibility of the true Church by a never-interrupted Succeſſion of Believers, teaching and practiſing the ſame Faith and Worſhip from the Apoſtles to theſe preſent days, have been in ſome ſort handled as points co-incident and con-natural; I ſhall not make any large diſcourſe of them ſeverally, though they did not a little contribute to my Converſion, but contract their ſtrength into one Syllogiſm; and ſo proceed to ſhow what effica-

cy Miracles wrought in the *Catholick* Church, for visible confirmation of her Faith and Worship to come from Heaven, ought to have upon our Adversaries, to reduce them to the bosom of that Chuch they have forsaken. The Argument runs thus.

The true Church of Christ hath Universality, perpetual visibility, and Succession of Pastors and People, from Christ and his Apostles to this time, and so to continue to the Worlds end, inseparably annexed to it.

But no *Schismatical* or *Heretical* Communion of Christians can possibly be universal, or have a perpetual visibility and Succession of Believers in those points which constitute them a distinct Commmunion from the *Catholick* Church, of which they were Members before their separation.

Therefore no *Schismatical* or *Heretical* Communion of Christians can be the true Church of Christ.

That

That the Minor, or ſecond propoſition belongs to the *Proteſtant* Church of *England*, is manifeſt from the former *Motive*, where 'twas evidenced to be *Schiſmatical* and *Heretical*; which once prov'd concerning any Communion of Chriſtians, 'tis implicatory in *ipſis terminis* to ſay, that 'tis, or can be univerſal viſibly Succeſſive from Chriſt and his Apoſtles to this time; being all one as to aſſert, *That it was founded by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and yet began afterwards by a voluntary ſeparation from the true Church ſo founded*; (which is the Eſſence of *Schiſm*) *and that they were a Congregation Believing, Ordaining, Preaching and Adminiſtring Sacraments, before they had a Beeing in the World: That is, they were, and were not at the ſame time.*

The Major, or firſt Propoſition, is manifeſted from Scriptures and Fathers briefly thus.

From St. *Matthew*, *Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of Word.* From St. *Luke*, *He ſhall reign* Mat. 28. 20. Luk. 1. 33.

*in the houſe of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end.*

St. John 14. 16, 17. From St. *John*, *The Comforter, the Spirit of Truth ſhall abide with you for ever.* From the promiſe of God,

Iſa. 2. 2. *All Nations ſhall flow unto it.* From the Commiſſion of Chriſt, *Go teach*

Mat. 28. *all Nations.* Which clearly demonſtrate the Church of Chriſt, from its firſt foundation to be *Catholick*, both in reſpect of Time and Place.

This alſo is the Doctrine of the

L. 1. ca. ult. Fathers. *'Tis only the* Catholick *Church hath the true Worſhip and Ser-*

Præfa. in l. Pictav. *vice of God*, ſaith *Lactantius*. *Let the Doctrine of the Church be kept* (ſaith *Origen*) *which is deliver'd from the Apoſtles by order of ſucceſſion, and remains in the Church to this very day.* See more in *Iren.* l. 1 c. 3. St. *Aug. Ser.* 131. & 181. *de Temp. de Unit. Eccl. c.* 2. *Tert. contra* Judæos.

For the perpetual viſibility of the true Church in an un-interrupted Succeſſion of lawful Paſtors and true Doctrine, Scripture is very copious. I ſhall name a few. *A City*

*ſeated on a Hill cannot be hid. The mountain of the houſe of our Lord ſhall be prepared on the top of mountains.* Mat. 5. 14. Iſ. 2. 2. Pſal. 18.

In ſole poſuit tabernaculum ſuum; *My Spirit which is thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed for ever.* Iſa 59.21.

*All Nations, Tribes, and Tongues ſhall ſerve him, his power is an eternal power that ſhall not be taken away, and his kingdom ſhall not be corrupted.* Dan. 7. 13, 14.

*Thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* Mat. 16.

*Chriſt gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors, ſome Doctors, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edification of the Body of Chriſt,* &c. *Till we all meet in the unity of Faith, and be not as Children toſs'd about with the wind of every Doctrine.* Eph. 4. 11 &c.

See more in *Eſa.* 62: *Ezek.* 37. *Matt.* 5. 15. &c.

From which, and ſuch like places, this Major Propoſition is evident. As alſo from Antiquity, *We muſt*

*ſeek*

L. 4. de hæ. c. 45. *ſeek for Truth among whom the Succeſſion of the Church from the Apoſtles, and the Purity of Doctrine is maintain'd in its Integrity,* So St. *Iræneus.*

L. de præſc. c. 37. *What I believe* (ſays *Tertullian*) *I received from the preſent Church, the preſent Church from the Primitive, that from the Apoſtles, the Apoſtles from Chriſt.* And St. *Auſtin* tells us,

Contr. Ep. Fund. c. 4. *That the ſucceſſion of Prieſts from the very ſeat of* Peter *to the preſent Biſhop held him in the Church.* Which if it ſhall not continue here on earth to the end of the World, to whom did our Lord ſay, *Behold I am with you alwayes to the Worlds end? It is eaſier* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſt.*) *that the Sun ſhould be extinguiſh'd then the Church ſhould be obſcured.* Concerning which, St.

L. 3. de Bapt. cont. Donat. De utilit. cred. c. 7. *Auſtin* aſſures us, *The Prophets have ſpoken more plainly and manifeſtly then of Chriſt himſelf. And therefore 'tis no wonder* (the ſame Saint affirms) *That the Church hath this moſt*

Cont. Petil. c. 104. *certain mark that it cannot be hid.* And certainly it is not hid except to thoſe that are loſt, the Children of perdition; who ſeeing will not ſee,

and

and hearing will not underſtand. Who ſhut their eyes againſt a light ſet upon a Candleſtick, and are ſo blind as not to ſee ſo great a mountani as the *Catholick* Church. As the ſame Father complains of the *Heretick*s of his days.

From which premiſſes thus prov'd, it invincibly follows, that the *Proteſtant*, and all other *Heretical* and *Schiſmatical* Churches, being wholly deſtitute of theſe inſeparable badges or marks of the true Church, *viz.* Univerſality, perpetual viſibility by an uninterrupted Succeſſion of Paſtors and People from Chriſt and his Apoſtles to this time, cannot poſſibly be the true Church, *Whoſe builder and preſerver is God.* All which manifeſtly belonging to the Church of *Rome*, and thoſe in Communion with her, by moſt undoubted Records of all Ages; it likewiſe, as inevitably follows, that this Church of *Rome* only is the true *Catholick* Church, and all other Communions but falſe Worſhippers. *L.* 3. *cont.* Parm.

Thus

Thus briefly of theſe indubitable marks of the true Church from Sacred Scripture, ſo much made uſe of by the Ancient Fathers to reduce the *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks* of their times to the *Catholick* unity, that I may not too long detain you from beholding Miracles wrought by God in his Holy Church for the confirmation of our Faith.

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## SECT. II.

### *That* Miracles *were vouchſafed always to the True Church.*

SUch is the Sublimity and Purity of Chriſtian Doctrine, ſo ſublime in reſpect of knowledge, ſo pure in reſpect of practice, that if there was nothing elſe to witneſs that it came from Heaven, they of themſelves are ſufficient evidences, that the Author of it can be no leſs then of incomprehenſible Wiſdom and

and infinite Holineſs. Notwithſtanding as God was pleas'd by wonderful Signs and frequent Miracles to ſet his Seal to atteſt the truth of it, that it might find entertainment from contradictors; ſo in after Ages (in oppoſition not only to all falſe Religions, who deny Chriſt, and maintain their Worſhip to be right, but alſo to many ſeduced Chriſtians, who pretend to have among them the Purity of this Doctrine) the ſame infinite Goodneſs hath more or leſs continued Miracles in his Church, that we may ſee with our eyes, what we ought to believe with our hearts, and not be deceived by falſe Teachers.

This Heavenly Teſtimony God vouchſafed to the *Jewiſh* Worſhip whilſt it was in force; and therefore cannot in reaſon be denyed to the Chriſtian Church, being in every reſpect a Miniſtration much more Divine and Glorious, and no leſs ſtanding in need of ſuch a Priviledge.

*Moſes brought forth the Children of* Iſrael *from the houſe of bondage in* Exod.

*ſigns*

*ſigns, and wonders, and mighty deeds.*
Joſ. 10. *The Sun ſtood ſtill at the Prayer of*
Iſa. 38. Joſhua; *and went back* 15 *degrees at the earneſt requeſt of* Hezekiah, *The bones of* Elizeus *the Prophet rais'd*
Joh. 5. 3. &c. *a dead man to life. The conſtant cure of Lame and Diſeaſed perſons in the Pool of* Bethesda *immediately after the motion of the water by an Angel, was a ſtanding Miracle*, &c. All which, with many more, were evident Teſtimonies of the Divine preſence among them; that the Creator and Governour of Heaven and Earth was their God in a ſpecial manner, and they his peculiar Church and People. To which might be added, their many Prophets of extraordinary Power and Sanctity, not only miraculous in their predictions, but ſometimes mighty in ſigns and deeds. Though 'tis obſervable that St. *John* the Baptiſt, though more then a Prophet, then whom none greater was born of women, yet did no Miracle to atteſt his Miſſion. Doubtleſs not without ſome ſingular cauſe; perhaps becauſe the

the *Jewiſh* Synagogue was then expiring and giving place to the Chriſtian Church, as a Handmaid to her Miſtreſs, or glimmering twi-light to the *Sun* ariſing in beams of Glory.

The moſt remarkable Miracles of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, are left unto his Church by the *Evangeliſts*, in the Hiſtory of his Life and Death, *That we might believe, and believing have Life Eternal by him.* After the Holy Apoſtles had received Power from above by deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, to fit them for the great work of converting all Nations to Chriſtianity, what wonders and ſigns were frequently wrought by them in the firſt planting of the Goſpel, are made famous, and well known to us in their *Acts*, related by St. *Luke* of Divine Authority. And how in after Ages, to this preſent, the Truth of Chriſtian Belief was atteſted to all men by ſigns from Heaven, more or leſs wrought in the *Catholick* Church by her Profeſſors, is manifeſt by the undoubted Records and Hiſtories of the

Acts.

the whole Christian World. Yea our Adversaries themselves, who are no friends to Miracles, have distinctly set down and asserted manifold wonders wrought successively in the Church for 1300 Ages after Christ; and why they should not as well believe the Miracles of the 14*th. Century* and upwards wrought in the same Church, related by as credible Authors as the former, with as much evidence of certainty, no man can imagine; but that they were resolved Miracles should cease before their Church had a Beeing in the World, lest they should justly be thought to introduce a false Religion, having not the voice of Divine Miracles to attest it. Wonderful! The frequent use of Miracles was afforded to the the first Promulgators of the Gospel to give give it rooting, and afterwards for increase; and no sooner comes their Religion up, but down goes Miracles to gain credit to It. As the Fathers must loose their Authority, and begin to be erroneous, when they manifestly assert

Magdebu. *Centuria.*

aſſert what condemns their Doctrine: So Miracles alſo muſt be put to ſilence, and witneſs no longer to the Truth, becauſe they will not ſpeak for their Religion. And indeed themſelves being wholly deſtitute of Miracles to confirm their new Faith, and confeſſing they had been ſo long continued in the *Roman Catholick* Church, they were neceſſitated (if they would be obſtinate in their way) though againſt all evidence of Authority, to deny any ſuch to be now wrought in her, leaſt thereby they ſhould confeſs that ſhe only is the true Church of Chriſt.

But that the ſtrength of this *Motive* may the better appear, I ſhall in the further proſecution of it; Firſt, declare wherein conſiſts the nature of true Miracles. Secondly, I ſhall ſet down the cauſes why God is pleas'd to work ſuch ſigns and wonders in, and by his Church. And thirdly, I ſhall cull out, among infinite, ſome ſpecial Miracles which relate to our preſent Controverſies;

being no leſs then ſo many Seals from Heaven ſtamp'd upon them in Divine Characters, as viſible evidences of Truth on the *Catholicks* ſide: And thoſe who aſſert the contrary, do, as it were deny God's atteſtation, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived.

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## SECT. III.

### *Wherein the nature of true* Miracles *conſiſts, is declared.*

A True Miracle is an effect beſide the ordinary courſe of the whole Creation; and ſo above the Power of any Created entity, viſible or inviſible Man or Angel. *Deus ſolus qui facit mirabilia magna*; 'tis God alone who worketh ſuch wonders, being the products of no leſs then Omnipotency it ſelf. For the order of the Univerſe in the concatenation of Cauſes and Effects being

being ſet a going by the Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs of our great Creator, the firſt mover, not by neceſſity of nature, but as a moſt free Agent according to the good pleaſure of his will, when it ſeems good unto him, he can act beſides this appointed courſe of nature; either by producing the effects of ſecondary cauſes without their concurrence, as by reſtoring ſick and maimed perſons to their perfect health and ſoundneſs in a moment, by a word; or (as we read in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*) by Aprons and Handkerchiefs, and ſuch like things, which having firſt touch'd the Bodies of his Saints, are applyed to the parties ill-affected for their recovery. Yea, the very ſhadow of St. *Peter* did cure many ſick and infirm perſons, who were expos'd in the Streets, lying in their Beds as he paſs'd by. Or elſe by reſtraining and curbing in the innate vertue of ſecondary cauſes from producing ſuch effects, to which by nature they are determin'd neceſſarily in the preſent circumſtances;

Acts 3. 7. *ca.* 4. 30. *ca.* 5. 3. *ca.* 19 11, 12, *&c.*

Act. 5. 15, 16.

cumſtances; as when the furious flames did not conſume the three Children in the fiery furnace; yea, not ſo much as the ſmell of fire took hold on their Garments: And as when the *Sun* was darkn'd at our Bleſſed Saviours paſſion, the *Moon* being in oppoſition to it in its natural courſe. Or elſe by producing ſome effects beyond the activity of created Agents, to which ſecond cauſes, though ſtrain'd to the utmoſt with their united forces, cannot extend themſelves; as cauſing two bodies at the ſame time to be in the ſame place, as when our Bleſſed Saviour came into his Diſciples through the doors ſhut; or raiſing the dead to life again, as *Lazarus* was by our Bleſſed Saviour.

Dan. 3. 22, &c.

Notwithſtanding our Souls being clouded with ignorance, ſo that we apprehend not the utmoſt energetical vertue of created cauſes, many things which are effected by a power ſecret and unknown to us, are accounted by us, (though falſly,) truely Miraculous; which indeed are either

either but Phantaſmes and meer deceptions; that is, things not really done, but only ſeem ſo. Or if really produced, and not in appearance only, they are done by the application of natural cauſes, though indiſcernable to dim-eyed reaſon. *Vera mira*, truly wonderful to us, becauſe effected by a ſecret vertue: But not *Vere Miracula*, not true Miracles in their nature, created cauſes producing them in the hand of quick-ſighted, ſtrenuous and nimble Agents. Of which ſort are all thoſe wonderful things which *Magicians* and *Witches* bring to paſs by the Power and aſſiſtance of the Devil. Such as the *Ægyptian Magi* wrought to harden *Pharaoh*'s heart, that he might not think *Moſes* was ſent from God, or did by a Divine Power work true Miracles to confirm his Miſſion. And Antichriſt will come in great Power, and ſigns, and lying wonders, according to the operation of Satan; not true Miracles the only and peculiar work of Omnipotency. *Antichriſti opera poſſunt dici eſſe ſigna mendacii,*

*Vide S. Tho. 22æ. q. 178. a. 2 in corp.*

2 Theſſ. 2. 9 &c.

*De Civ. Dei l. 20. c. 19.*

*cii*, &c. *The works of Antichriſt* (ſays St. *Auſtin*) *may be call'd lying wonders, either becauſe he ſhall deceive mens ſenſes by Phantaſms, ſeeming to do what indeed he does not; or if they be true Prodigies, yet they ſhall draw men to believe a lye.* For they ſhall give credit to that man of ſin, as if he brought them to paſs by a Divine Power, though only are effected by natural cauſes unknown to them.

Joh. 14 12.

Now though all things are alike eaſie to Omnipotency, and ſo no Miracle properly greater then another, as having eye to the Power producing ſuch effects; Yet as more or leſs exceeding the faculty of created cauſes, and looking that way, they are truely ſaid to be more or leſs Miraculous according to that of our B. ſſed Saviour, *He that believes in me, the works that I do he ſhall do alſo, and greater than theſe ſhall he do.* And therefore Miracles by St. *Thomas* are marſhall'd into three Heads or Claſſes.

1 p. q. cv. a. 8. corp

Firſt, thoſe which wholly exceed the power of created Cauſes in the very

very ſubſtance of the effect. *As the Sun ſtanding ſtill at the Prayer of* Joſhua; *going back at the requeſt of* Hezekiah. *A mortal body to be glorified, as in the tranſfiguration of our Bleſſed Saviour. Tranſubſtantiation in the moſt holy and dreadful Sacrifice of the Maſs.* Which are the greateſt of Miracles, and in no ſort produceable by the utmoſt Powers of created nature.

Secondly, ſuch which tranſcend the faculty of nature, yet not if we have an eye to the thing it ſelf that's done, but the qualification of the ſubject, in whom 'tis done or effected. That is, natural cauſes can produce the ſubſtance of the Miracle, but never in the preſent circumſtances. *As to give ſight to the blind, or raiſe the dead to life*; And does in daily vital productions, but not to one dead, *As* Lazarus *and* Tabitha *were*: And can give ſight, but not to one blind, *As he who was born ſo, cured by our Lord and Saviour.* However theſe being Miraculous only in reſpect of the ſubject wherein ſuch Joh. 9.

effects are brought to paſs, yet are altogether above the vertue of ſecondary cauſes, and ſo as true Miracles as thoſe of the firſt Claſſis.

The third and loweſt ſort are thoſe which exceed the faculty of Nature; neither according to the ſubſtance of the effect, or ſubject wherein they are produced, but only according to the manner and order of their production. *As when perſons, not incurably ſick or lame in the hands of Artiſts with an ordinary concurrence of the ſupremeſt cauſe, are ſuddenly reſtor'd to health and ſoundneſs without the help of Phyſick, Chyrurgery, or the uſual proceedings in ſuch caſes. And ſo the Apoſtles ſpeaking with divers tongues, which are attainable by time and induſtry in ſubjects capable of ſuch perfections, yet in them was miraculous, in that they being ignorant, were ſuddenly endowed with ſuch extraordinary knowledge and eloquence, to the amazement and confuſion of their enemies. Of which ſort are alſo ſudden Thunders and Lightnings, Winds and Storms, when ſe-*

*cond*

*cond and immediate causes are not so big with such effects as to be deliver'd of them; but rather in all probability promising the contrary to the best sighted understandings in such matters.*

Now such miracles as these, though always produced by a divine power when Holy persons are the Instruments, yet may, and sometimes are (when God permits) wrought by *Magick* and compact with the Devil, who can so improve natural causes, as on a suddain to bring forth such effects. Which being possible to Omnipoteny, and consequently not true Miracles in a strict and proper acceptation, but in a large sense so call'd from the wonderful manner of their production; if the *Catholick* Church had no other but such to attest her Doctrine to come from Heaven, they could not simply of themselves be sufficient evidences of the Truth of Christian Religion, and that the Workers of them are sent by God. However such wonderful effects, when they Manifestly tend to destroy the kingdom

dom of Satan, invincibly prove their origen to be from the Author of Holineſs. And therefore 'tis not difficult to diſcover when theſe wonders are effected by a Divine Power and aſſiſtance, and when by the help of the Devil. Namely, when either the Sanctity of the perſon is ſuch as is no way lyable to be ſuſpected to have any dealing with the Powers of Darkneſs; Or if this be wanting, when the Purity of the Doctrine, as a glorious ray beaming from the Sun of righteouſneſs, is ſuch, that a confirmation thereof in ſuch a manner cannot rationally be thought but to come from Heaven: Or when God is pleas'd, beſides theſe inferior wonders, to work alſo ſuch Miracles by the ſame perſon, or others profeſſing the ſame Faith, which cannot really be produced by any but himſelf. Of which his true Church was never deſtitute, and no other Communion could ever boaſt, or juſtly challenge.

SECT.

## SECT. IV.

### *Some reaſons of Gods proceeding in this manner.*

WHen the infinite Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God is pleas'd to work Miracles in his Church, ordinarily the Inſtruments he makes uſe of to produce ſuch effects, are perſons eminent for Sanctity. Yet not ſo, as that we ought to make the number or greatneſs of their Miracles the rule to judge of the degrees of their Holineſs. Yea, 'tis not an Infallible argument to conclude ſuch an one to be a Saint; for the grace of working Miracles being conferr'd upon the true Church, principally for the edification of others; a perſon not juſtified, and ſo not righteous in the ſight of God, may be a wonder-working Inſtrument to ſave his Brethren, and yet himſelf become

a Reprobate. Of which we need no more evident teſtimony then from the mouth of thoſe Pleaders in St. *Matthew*; *Lord have not we Prophe-*
Ch 7 22, &c. *ſied in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out Devils, and in thy Name wrought many Miracles?* And yet they receive this dreadful Anſwer, *I know ye not, depart from me ye workers of Iniquity.* The cauſe where-
Lib. 83. Quæſti. 79. qu. of St. *Auſtin* gives us, *Admonet nos Dominos*, &c. *Our Lord puts us in mind that we may underſtand wicked men alſo to do ſome Miracles, which Saints cannot do. Therefore they are not granted to all Saints, leaſt the weak ſhould be deceived with a moſt pernicious errour, ſuppoſing greater gifts to be in ſuch deeds than in works of righteouſneſs, by which we purchaſe eternal life.*

Now God confers this grace and wonderful power on his Church: Firſt, for the confirmation of the Chriſtian Faith, as his viſible Seal ſet to it, that 'tis true and came from Heaven, as the only means to bring us thither; and ought to be entertain'd

tain'd as ſuch, by all who deſire to ſave their precious Souls. This is manifeſt from the Promiſe of our Bleſſed Saviour to his Church, *Mark* 16. 17. *Theſe ſings ſhall follow thoſe that believe, in my Name they ſhall caſt out Devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new Tongues, they ſhall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it ſhall not hurt them; they ſhall lay their hands upon the Sick, and they ſhall Recover.* This is the Promiſe.

See the performance in the 20 *ver. And they went and Preached every where, our Lord co-operating and confirming the Word with ſigns following.* For ſo the Eyes of their Auditors might tell them the Doctrine they heard was from God, and no humane invention, and therefore inexcuſable in oredulous. As in the 16 *verſe, Whoſoever Believes and is Baptiz'd, ſhall be ſaved, but who believes not ſhall be damned.* Hence it is, that Signs are ſaid to be for Unbelievers, that by ſuch evidences of Truth they may be Converted,

and

and all the ends of the Earth ſee the Salvation of our God.

And this way of Divine atteſtation, the wiſdom of God hath thought good to uſe, as moſt proportionably to our preſent capacity, and conſequently moſt likely to produce the effect for which 'tis intended. For Truth entring into the the cloſet of our Soul through the port of our Senſes; as by the innate light of the underſtanding, with an ordinary concurrence of the prime cauſe, man can attain to ſome degree of the knowledge of God by natural effects, and is utterly inexcuſable if he does not: So to induce us to the belief of things wholly ſupernatural and unattainable but by Divine Revelation, he's pleas'd ſometimes by extraordinary and ſupernatural effects, namely Miracles, to work upon our Senſes; that we might believe and be ſaved; or we rendred inexcuſable, when unbelief ſhall be laid to our charge. And therefore 'tis ſaid, *He that believes not are condemned already.* As having

Mar. 16. 16.

no-

nothing to ſay for themſelves, in that they ſo wilfully ſhut their eyes in Sun-ſhine. that they might not ſee and be converted. And our Bleſſed Saviour ſays elſewhere, *If I had not done thoſe works among them which none other hath done, they had not ſinn'd, but now they have no excuſe for their ſin.* Joh. 15. 22, &c.

But as Miracles are to beget Faith where 'tis not, ſo the next uſe of them is to give ſtrength and growth to it, where 'tis already planted, leaſt at any time we ſhould have a heart of Infidelity to depart from the Truth received; either by flat *Apoſtacy*, which more rarely happens; or by *Schiſm* and *Hereſie*, which are Satan's commoneſt ſnares wherein he catches unwary Souls to their deſtruction. What can they ſay for themſelves, to whom in ſo much Heavenly Light the *Croſs* becomes a ſtumbling-block, ſo as to fall away from their ſtability; or once fallen, if they will not riſe again, and be recall'd into the boſom of the *Catholick* Church by the voice of ſuch won-

wonderful works crying aloud after them; even ſufficient to engrave Faith in a rocky-hearted *Jew*, and introduce belief into very Infidels?

From whence appears the abſurdneſs of that *Proteſtant* Theſis, *That all Miracles are now ceaſed in the Church.* For beſides indubitable teſtimonies from clouds of Witneſſes enough to ſatisfy any rational man, theſe cauſes yet continuing, *viz. Infidelity*, *Hereſie* and *Schiſm*, God will alſo ſtill continue the ſame ſupernatural effects to beget or confirm ſupernatural Faith in the Souls of men. But why they are not ſo frequent as in the firſt planting of the Goſpel, this may be one reaſon, in that the true Church being manifeſted to the World by thoſe Miracles, which more or leſs in every Age are wrought in her Communion, and her's only, entitle her juſtly to all the reſt confirming the ſame Faith, which others cannot claim by the like evidence. For the principal end of Miracles being for the confirmation of true Faith, taught by

by Chriſt and his Apoſtles to the World, either to give it birth or growth, if God did vouchſafe to work in the ſame manner ſuch wonderful Signs and Prodigies by any perſons in other Communions than his *Catholick* Church, they could not be ſufficient Teſtimonies from Heaven of Divine Truth, but be inſtrumental likewiſe to ſet a luſtre on deeds of Darkneſs, and harden poor ſeduced Souls in erroneous Worſhip. Neither had the Ancient Apologiſts for the Chriſtian Faith rationally made uſe of Miracles as a convincing argument of the Truth thereof, if *Infidels*, or others, could have produced juſtly the like evidences to give Teſtimony to their falſe Religion. See *Heb.* 2. *ver.* 3, 4. St. *Joh.* 5. 36. *ch.* 7. 31. *ch.* 9. 30. *ch.* 10. 28. *ch.* 15. 22, 24. Hence St. *Gregory*, *Quia carnales adhuc*, &c. *Hom.* 2. *in Evan.*

*Becauſe the Diſciples being yet carnal could not underſtand his myſterious words, he proceeds to a Miracle, a blind man receives his ſight before their eyes, that who underſtood not the*

*words of Divine Myſtery, Heavenly deeds might work Faith in them.*

Thirdly, God works Miracles in his Church to manifeſt the extraordinary Sanctity of ſome perſons to whom he's pleas'd to vouchſafe a ſpecial Honour, and thereby propoſes as ſingular examples for others to imitate in their glorious walkings. And this is done either while they are living, or after death by their Sacred Relicks and Interceſſion; and ſometimes in both they are alike glorified by him who only works Miracles, whomſoever he makes choice of for the Inſtruments. Which no falſe Worſhipers in the World can challenge to their Profeſſion. Yet that ſuch have been, and are ſtill wrought by Saints in the Communion of the *Roman Catholick* Church, there are as good proofs to evidence it to the World, as that there was ſuch a man as *Henry* the 8*th.* once King of *England.* Which certainty none pretend to deny.

And

And though *Proteſtants* cannot lay claim to any true Miracles for the confirmation of their Faith and practice, yet how fain they would have their new Religion ſo atteſted, is manifeſt in that they greedily catch at ſhaddows, and interpret any thing that's ſomewhat ſtrange and not ordinary, as the ſingular actings of God in their behalf. Or if any among them obſerve ſome auſterities in the contempt of worldly Pleaſures and Contentments, (which is ſo frequent among *Catholicks*,) preſently this is a Sanctity without parallel, and by the wind of vainglory is puffed up to the Prodigious greatneſs of a wonder. And I confeſs, if all rare things are Miraculous, this among them may juſtly be ſo accounted.

To theſe I might add the manifeſtation of the power of his Godhead, and the riches of his Goodneſs towards his Church, by ſuch extraordinary workings, beſide the courſe of univerſal nature, to make up the number of his Elect and con-

ſummate them in Glory But theſe laſt are not proper to my preſent purpoſe, and the former related reaſons are thoſe for which God is pleaſed principally to work Miracles in the true Church; and ought to be operative upon rational Souls, to bring them to the knowledge, and the embracing of the Truth.

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## SECT. V.

### *Some undoubted and moſt famous* Miracles *relating to the preſent Controverſies between Us and* Proteſtants.

*De Civi. Dei l. 22. c. 8.* ST. *Auſtin* having related ſome Miracles wrought upon *Devotes* at St. *Stephens Shrine* by his ſpecial interceſſion, whereof himſelf was an eye-witneſs, affirms, *That if he ſhould record all that he knew to have been done in thoſe Territories, he muſt*

*muſt fill Books.* And ſo might I too, with much more reaſon, if I ſhould ſet down but the tenth of thoſe which concern the preſent Controverſies between *Proteſtants* and Us, having confin'd my ſelf to no leſs limits then the Chriſtian World, affording innumerable Miracles, the truth of which cannot juſtly be queſtion'd, becauſe deliver'd to our knowledge with as much certainty as matters of fact are capable of. However I ſhall be brief, and only ſelect out ſome few which I conceiv'd moſt convincing to Souls yet hardned with unbelief. And had wholly ſpar'd this labour, but that I know particulars are preſſing and powerful, being fallen unhappily among Goſpellers, who beſides other evidences of Truth, will not believe except they ſee ſigns and wonders to atteſt our Faith. And which is far worſe, as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* demanded of our Bleſſed Saviour, *A ſign from Heaven to witneſs he was ſent from God*, when a Miracle juſt now wrought before their Mat. 12. 38.

eyes was yet warm: So this evil generation, while they are ſurrounded with the Heavenly light of Miracles wrought in the Church, yet ſeeing will not ſee, and ask of us a ſign from Heaven to confirm our Doctrine. Which that we are not deſtitute of, I hope what follows will give them ſatisfaction.

I begin with the Bleſſed Sacrament of the *Altar*, which our Adverſaries call our *Idol*, being it ſelf the greateſt of Miracles, or rather a concourſe of many in a moſt wonderful and myſterious manner, and therefore hath been atteſted oftentimes by others to confirm our Faith in a point ſo far tranſcending the comprehenſion of our intellectual powers. And were ſo operative, among other Arguments; one *Berengarius*, the firſt that ever denyed the real preſence of Chriſt in the bleſſed *Euchariſt*, that he recanted and abjured his *Hereſie*, to believe as formerly he had done the undoubted Doctrine of all Ages.

*circa an.* 1050.

St.

St. *Bernard* ſaying *Maſs* in the Cathedrall at *Millain* in a great Aſſembly, they preſented to him a Woman who had been a long time vexed with a Devil, earneſtly requeſting his help, with a ſtrong belief that God would free her by his Interceſſion. Being overcome with their intreaties, and the miſerable Object, proceeding in the Sacrifice, as oft as the Sacred *Hoſt* was to be ſigned, he turning towards the woman, made alſo as often the ſign of the Holy *Croſs* upon her. Which how ill the unclean Spirit could endure, he quickly diſcover'd by more lamentably tormenting the poor wretch. The Holy man having now finiſh'd the *Lords Prayer* in the *Canon*, makes a fiercer on-ſet upon the Enemy; for putting the moſt Sacred Body of our Lord and Saviour upon the *Paten*, and holding it over the womans head, ſaid, *Unclean Spirit, thy judge is preſent, a Power above thee is preſent, reſiſt now if thou canſt; he's preſent who being ready to ſuffer for our Salvation, ſaid, now ſhall* *Invita Ber c. 2. ca. 3.*

*the Prince of this World be caſt forth: This is that Sacred Body which was aſſumed of the Bleſſed Virgn, that Body which was nail'd unto the Croſs, which was laid in the Grave, which roſe from Death, which in the ſight of his Diſciples aſcended into Heaven. Wherefore in the dreadful Name of this Majeſty I command thee, thou Malicious Spirit, to depart out of this hand-maid of God, and preſume not hereafter to touch her.* Whereupon the unclean Spirit playing the Devil indeed, by exceedingly tormenting her, becauſe his time was ſhort, in rage and fury left his habitation, as ſoon as the *Pax* was given, after the Saints return unto the *Altar*. And ſhe being ſo miraculouſly recover'd, gave thanks to the Almighty goodneſs, and beholding the happy Inſtrument of her deliverance, caſt her ſelf humbly at his feet.

Thus our moſt merciful and powerful God was pleaſed to reward the Faith of his People, to magnify his Servant in their ſight, and manifeſt his inviſible Deity under

der the viſible ſpecies by this wonderful effect. And truly methinks, thoſe very words ſpoken by ſo great a Saint, and confirm'd by ſo evident a Miracle, if well conſider'd and laid to heart, could not but as well diſpoſſeſs the *Sacramentarian Hereticks* of their Devil of Unbelief concerning this dreadful myſtery of our Holy Faith, as they did that Woman of the unclean Spirit, wherewith ſhe had been ſo long vexed. A Miracle no leſs famous then evident, for it follows in the Author, *Fugato diabolo ingens per Eccleſiam tollitur murmur*, &c. *The woman being diſpoſſeſs'd, the Church ecchoed with ſounds of joy, old and young bleſs God for't, and what was done at* Millian *is noiſed abroad through all* Italy. *Vita S. Ber*

At *Bruſſels* in *Flanders* ſome *Jews* having ſtollen the Conſecrated *Hoſts* out of the Tabernacle of St. *Catharine*'s Chappel, on *Good-Friday* following with intention in deſpite of our Bleſſed Saviour, to put to death again, as much as lay in their Power, *Ann. Ch.* 1442.

the

the Lord of Life, ſtabbed the Sacred *Hoſts* with Pen-knives and Bodkins; from which wounds miraculouſly iſſued out drops of Blood to their great aſtoniſhment and confuſion. At which being horribly amazed and terrifyed with the apprehenſion of ſome preſent judgment to fall upon them, not daring to touch the Sacred *Hoſts*, they ſent for one *Catharine*, formerly a *Jew*, now a *Chriſtian*, and confeſſing to her what they had done, and what had happned, deſired her to take away the Conſecrated *Hoſts*, and keep the whole buſineſs ſecret from the *Chriſtians*. She promiſed; but troubled in Conſcience at the horror of the Fact, carrying with her the Bleſſed *Hoſts*, revealed it to the *Clergy* of the City. Whereupon after a full tryal and examination, the ſaid *Jews* were condemned to be Burnt for this moſt execrable Impiety, and Executed accordingly. Part of which miraculous *Hoſts* being kept in the aforeſaid Chappel, and part in the great Church of St. *Gudile*

*dile* in the ſaid City, God was pleaſed to work many Miracles upon ſuch perſons who reſorted thither out of ſpecial Devotion to the ſaid wonderful *Hoſts*; the blind recovering their ſight, the ſick their health; the lame their Limbs, leaving their Crutches behind them as monuments of Gods extraordinary mercy by Gods means vouchſafed unto them. Of all which there's no reaſon to doubt, being atteſted by Witneſſes beyond all exception, and thereupon approv'd by authoriz'd perſons, were committed to the publick Records of thoſe places, for the confirmation of the Churches belief in the myſteries of that moſt wonderful Sacrament, ſo much Blaſphemed by *Jews* and *Hereticks*.

*Pontianus* relates, *That one* Paul Form *having ſtollen two Conſecrated Hoſts, ſold one of them to the* Jews, *who out of malice and contempt ſtabbed it, ſaying,* If thou be the God of the Chriſtians, manifeſt thy ſelf. *Whereupon to their confuſion, and confirmation of our holy Faith, Blood miraculouſly* *L. 5 de Mirabil.*

*raculouſly iſſued out of the dreadful Hoſt. Which being diſcover'd, thirty eight of them were Burnt at* Knoblock *in* Brandenburg, *and all the reſt baniſh'd out of that* Marqueſate *for this horrible Fact.* As 'tis recorded alſo by *John Mandevil* a *Proteſtant*, and *Oſiander* a *Lutheran*.

*L. de locis Com. p.* 87. *Epiſt.* 116.

I cannot but relate what *Thomas Waldenſis* our Country man relates he was an eye-witneſs of in St. *Paul's* Church in *London*, *Where one of* Wickliff's *Diſciples, who renewed the* Hereſie *of* Berengarius *in theſe parts, being commanded by the Archbiſhop of* Canterbury, *to acknowledge the real Preſence of Chriſt in the Bleſſed Sacrament, and adore him; he refuſing, ſaid,* A Spider deſerv'd more veneration than the *Euchariſt. And forthwith from the roof deſcended a monſtruous Spider to his Blaſpemous Lips, which the ſtanders by could hardly keep from running into his mouth, which had ſpit worſe Venom againſt our Saviour.*

*Tom.* 2. *de Sacr.ca.* 63.

Who deſire further ſatisfaction in this particular, let them conſult *Paſchaſius*

*chasius de corp. & Sang. Christi. Algerus de Sacramentis.* Among the more Ancient St. *Cyprian de lapsis, Prosper. de prædict. part.* 4. *cap.* 6. *S. Greg. l.* 2. *Dialog. & Petrus Diaconus in vita S. Gregorii.*

As for the *Catholick* practice in having recourse to the intercession of Saints glorified, and veneration of their Sacred Reliques, Antiquity and all Ages abound with unquestionable Miracles, as so many Seals set upon them by the hand of God for their approbation. St. *Austin* relates many; the certain knowledge of some of them being conveyed to his Soul through the windows of his own eyes, the rest famous and of undoubted verity. See also *Greg. Turon. l.* 1. *de gloria Martyr. Baro. tom.* 5. *an* 416. *Niceph. l.* 4. *Hist. Eccl. ca.* 9. *Theod. Ser. de donis collatis intercessione Martyrum.* One or two will not tire the Reader.

*De Civit. dei l.* 22. *c.* 8. *Epist.*103. *Ser.*31,32, 33

*There was one* Martial *a chief man his rank, Aged, and much abominating the Christian Faith: Who being dangerously sick, and much importun'd with*

S. Aug. *l.* 22 *de Civ. c.* 8.

*with the Prayers and Tears of his Daughter and Son in Law, who were Chriſtians, to be Baptiz'd; refus'd, and in ſullen indignation thruſt them from him. His Son in Law thought good to go to St.* Stephen's *Memory or Shrine, and Pray there earneſtly for his Converſion. Which performing with great devotion in ſighs and tears, and ſo departing from the* Altar *took ſome Flowers, and at night laid them at his Fathers Head. He took his reſt, and behold before morning cryes out to ſend for the Biſhop, (who then by chance was with me at* Hippo) *and underſtanding he was abſent, deſired his Prieſts to come to him. They came, he confeſſes his Faith in Chriſt, and was Baptiz'd among the wonders and joy of them all. And afterwards as long as he liv'd, for he liv'd not long after, he ſtill had in his mouth,* Chriſt receive my Spirit; *which were the laſt words of Bleſſed* Stephen *when Martyr'd by the* Jews.

*God was pleaſed to reveal by a Viſion to St.* Ambroſe *where the Bodies of the Holy Martyrs* Gervaſius *and*

Pro-

Protaſius *lay buried, and 'till then uncorrupted, in a place not well beſitting thoſe Sacred Reliques. Their Graves are open'd, their Bodies taken up, and while they are carried in ſolemn Proceſſion to be honourably Inter'd in the Cathedral of that City, many poſſeſs'd with unclean Spirits were perfectly cured; and a certain Citizen well known to all the Inhabitants, who had been blind many years, hearing the noiſe ask'd the cauſe of their preſent Jubilee: Being told it, he leap'd for joy, and deſired to be led to the Bodies, whither being come, he begg'd to be admitted to touch with his Handkerchief the Bier made Holy with thoſe Sacred Reliques: He did ſo, and applyed it to his Eyes, and forthwith recover'd his ſight, to his exceeding great joy, and admiration of them all, giving glory to God for vouchſafing ſuch Honour to his Saints.* St. *Auſtin* mentions this alſo in his *9th.* Book of *Confeſs. chap.* 7. and *de Unit. Eccl. c.* 10. *St.* Ambr. *Epiſt.* 85. *ad Sororem. & Ser.* 91. Whole Volumes might be writ of undoubted

bted Relations of this nature, and yet *Proteſtants* will not believe, but follow prophane *Vigilantius*, ſays St. *Auſtin* and the *Catholick* Church what they can to the contrary.

For the confirmation of *Purgatory*, I ſhall inſert one or two Miraculous Relations out of Venerable *Bede*; whom I have made choice of becauſe our Countryman, and as of great Learning, ſo of ſingular Integrity, which other circumſtances concurring in him, render his *Hiſtory* moſt unqueſtionable. I give you not all, nor always his words, but am Faithful to his ſenſe and meaning.

L 4. *Hiſt:* ca 22. *A noble young man by name* Imma, *in a battel between* Ecgfrid *King of* North-humber *and* Edilred *King of* Mercia, *being left for dead among the ſlain, at laſt reviv'd, and ſeeking help was taken by the Enemy, and carried to their Governour; before whom counterfeiting himſelf a Countrey Fellow that brought Proviſion to the Army, care was taken for him; and beginning to gather ſtrength, command*

*was*

*was given to fetter him with Chains, that he might not eſcape by night; but by no means could he be bound, ſeeing no ſooner were they gone who bound him, but the Chains looſed of themſelves. For he had a Brother by Name* Tunna, *a Prieſt and Abbot, who hearing he was ſlain in the battel, came to ſeek his Body, and finding one very like it, carryed that away for the Body of his Brother to his Monaſtery, where he honourably interr'd it; and took care that many* Maſſes *ſhould be ſaid for the Abſolution of his Soul. By reaſon whereof none could bind him, but forthwith he was looſed. The noble man, whoſe Priſoner he was, began to wonder, and ſuſpecting* Magick, *demanded of him the cauſe thereof: Who anſwered, I have a Brother who is a Prieſt, and I know, he ſuppoſing me to be dead, ſays* Maſs *often for me, as if I was in another life, where my Soul might be looſed from pains by his interceſſions. This paſs'd on, and being perfectly recover'd, he ſold him to another; but what kind of bonds ſoever were put upon him they were all*

*looſed; but moſt commonly after the third hour, when* Maſſes *are uſually celebrated, All which he relating to his Brother after his Redemption, his conjectures were found to be real Truths. And many hearing theſe things from the foreſaid man, were inflamed with Faith and Devotion to Pray, to give Alms, or offer to our Lord Sacrifices of the Oblation for the deliverance of their deceaſed Friends. For they underſtood that the ſaving Sacrifice was prevalent for the everlaſting redemption of Soul and Body. This Hiſtory I had from ſome who heard it from the perſon himſelf on whom this Miracle was wrought, and therefore have inſerted it for an undoubted Truth.*

The other is in the 13*th chap.* of his 5*th. Book* of the foreſaid Hiſtory, whereof I ſhall only take ſo much as I conceive oppoſite to our preſent purpoſe.

*In theſe days a notable Miracle to be equall'd to thoſe of old happ'ned. For to ſtir up the living from a Spiritual death, a certain man, by name*

Drithelm,

*dure the fury of the exceſſive heat, (poor Souls!) they threw themſelves into the midſt of the inſufferable cold. And when they could find no reſt neither in thoſe Winter quarters, again betook themſelves to the torrid Zone*, &c.

*Knoweſt thou, ſaid my Guide, all theſe things which thou haſt ſeen? I anſwered, no, he replyed; that Valley, which you behold ſo terrible with intolerable heat and cold, is that place wherein the Souls of thoſe are to be pacified and chaſtis'd, who deferring to confeſs and amend their wickedneſſes, fly at laſt to repentance on their deathbeds, and ſo leave their Bodies; who yet, becauſe they confeſſed and repented, though but before their departure, ſhall at the day of Judgment be all received into Heaven. But the Prayers of the Living, and Alms, and Faſts, and eſpecially the ſaying* Maſſes *do help many, that they may be freed before the day of judgment*, &c.

*And this I had*, ſays S. *Bede, from one* Genegils *a Monk and Prieſt, of a very holy and rigid life, who often*

*convers'd about theſe things with this miraculous Liver, ſo famous for his wonderful Auſterities and Viſions, that both by word and deed he wrought powerfully on many to repent and ſpend their time well, on which depends everlaſting bliſs, or eternal miſery.*

And yet *Proteſtants* are never the better, refuſing to believe that there is never a *Purgatory* for penitent Souls thoroughly purg'd at their departure from their Bodies, though this man and others have been ſent from the dead to teſtify to the World the truth thereof. Which I confeſs I ceaſe to wonder at, when I conſider, that they are deaf to the living voice of the *Catholick* Church.

If I ſhould proceed in relating what wonderful Miracles God hath been pleaſed to work for the Approbation of a *Monaſtical* Life from Heavenly, by men famous in that Angelical Profeſſion, both in former and later Ages; as St. *Benedict*, St. *Bernard*, St. *Dominick*, St. *Franciſ*, St. *Tereſia*, St. *Ignatius*, I ſhould utterly

utterly deſtroy my intended brevity; and therefore refer you to their Lives faithfully tranſmitted to Poſterity. But eſpecially to the wonderful Life of that great Saint and Patriarch of Monaſtical Profeſſion in the *Weſt*, S. *Benedict*, which the Church owes to that famous Light and Doctor St. *Gregory*, deſerved-called *Englands* Apoſtle.

For he was embarqued, and on his way to bring the glad tydings of the Goſpel to our Nation, though recall'd to *Rome* againſt his will and inclination. And afterwards when advanc'd to the Popedom, he ſent St. *Auſtin* and his fellow Monks to perform what he intended. Who *Ann. Ch.* ſucceeding in the Holy attempt, and 596. converting *Edilbert* King of *Kent* with his People, and from thence diffuſing the Chriſtian Faith by degrees into other parts, did Preach and eſtabliſh all thoſe doctrines, rites and Ceremonies practis'd at this day by the Church of *Rome*, as *Proteſtants* confeſs, being forc'd to it by the evidence of unqueſtionable Re-

cords. And yet now eſteem'd by them but as Superſtitious Innovations, though God has been pleaſed to own them for his, and confirm the word and practice of the ſaid Teachers with following Miracles, which were wrought ſo frequently by the Holy Monk St. *Auſtin*, that B. *Gregory* exhorts him him to Humility in theſe words, *I know moſt dear Brother, that Omnipotent God hath ſhown great Miracles by you to the Nation whom he would have elect. Wherefore 'tis neceſſary that concerning this Heavenly gift you rejoyce with trembling, and tremble with joy. You may rejoyce in that the* Engliſh *Nation is brought to inward Grace by theſe outward Miracles. But fear, leaſt by reaſon thereof the infirm mind ſhould exalt it ſelf in preſumption; and while 'tis extoll'd with honour abroad, be depreſſed at home with the levity of vain Glory*, &c.

*L.* 1. *Hiſt. S.* Bedæ *c.* 31.

And why theſe Miracles wrought by the ſaid Saint in his Apoſtleſhip ſhould not be evidences, as well of his Miſſion and Doctrine, as thoſe ac-

accompanying the first Promulgators of the Gospel to the World, no reason sufficient can be given. This I am sure of, as they converted *Infidels*, so they stop'd the mouths also of the *Britains* who long before had received the *Christian* Faith, and in some few external Observance differ'd from him. About which the *British* Bishops and the said Apostle meeting to make up a perfect unity between them, when neither Arguments, nor advice, nor entreaty, nor reproof could prevail to perswade them to the *Catholick* customs in the observation of *Easter*, *Tonsure*, and some other Ceremonial Rites in Baptism; A blind man was brought in, and they upon tryal not obtaining of God a Miracle for the confirmation of their practice; *Tandem* Augustinus *justa necessitate compulsus*, &c. (they are St. *Bedes* words) *At length* Austin *forced with just necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, beseeching him, that he would restore to the blind man his lost sight,* *Hist. l. 2. ca. 2.*

*and*

*and by the corporal illumination of one, Spiritual Grace might enlighten many Faithful hearts. Hereupon immediately the blind man receives his ſight, and* Auſtin *is extolled by all for a true Preacher of the Supreme Light. Then the* Britains *confeſs indeed that they perceived it was the true way of righteouſneſs which* Auſtin *Preached.*

This I had not ſpecifyed, but that I know ſome *Engliſh Proteſtants*, againſt all Hiſtory and common ſenſe, derive their Religion from the Ancient *Britains*: Who differ'd only from the Apoſtle of the *Saxons* and his Converts in ſome few External Rites, which afterward in tract of time they generally receiv'd, and in the *interim* acknowledg'd to be worthy of acceptation, while the freſh wounds of deeply-reſented injuries were the greateſt cauſe of non-conformity.

One more I cannot paſs over in ſilence, becauſe I conceive it ſuch as may much conduce to the conviction and converſion of our Adverſaries. 'Tis to be found in the Life of St. *Bernard* to this effect. In

In the part of *France* about *Thoulouze*, one *Henry* an Apoſtate Monk by deceitful words perverting the Souls of many with Heretical Doctrines, prevail'd ſo far that every where thereabouts the Grace of Baptiſm was denyed, Prayers and Oblations for the dead were mock'd at, Invocation of Saints derided, Excommunications of Prieſts, Pilgrimages of the Faithful, building of Churches, Conſecration of Oyl and Chriſme, and all Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, were deſpis'd. Our cauſe in *England*. L. 3. c. 5.

St. *Bernard* being intreated by the *Catholicks* ſadly lamenting to ſee ſo many poor Souls ſeduced to follow an Apoſtate, as if he had been an Apoſtle, was conquer'd by their Prayers, and came thither to hinder the further ſpreading of ſo contagious an evil, and to try his skill on the infected. Where Preaching with wonderful demonſtration of Spirit, as well as admirable Eloquence, he in a ſhort time inſtructed the Ignorant, ſtrengthned the Weak, recall'd

call'd the Wanderers, reſtored the Subverted, put to ſil nce the Perverters, God confirming his Doctrine with ſigns following. I ſhall relate but one ſo home and evident, that 'tis enough to convert and confound all Contradictors.

*Cap. 6. l. 3. præd.*

During theſe his travails in the work of an Evangeliſt, being come to the City of *Sarlat*, the Sermon ended, they brought to the Servant of God Bread to be bleſt and diſtributed among the Faithful, as is the cuſtom in *Catholick* Churches. Which he bleſſing in the Name of God, with his hand elevated making the ſign of the Croſs, ſaid, *By this ye ſhall know that the Doctrine which we Preach is true, and the things which* Hereticks *would perſwade you to, are falſe, if your Sick taſting this Bread, ſhall be recover'd.*

A venerable Biſhop preſent, fearing the tryal, ſaid, *They ſhall be healed if they take it believing.* To whom the Holy man replyed in a full belief of the event, *I ſay not ſo, but ſuch as taſt it ſhall be healed, and thereby*

Drithelm, *dead for ſome time, was raiſed again to his Natural life, and related many things which he had ſeen worthy to be remembred. An Houſholder he was in the County of* North-humber, *living Religiouſly with his Family. Whom ſickneſs ſeiſing on, and encreaſing dayly, at laſt agonizing, died in the beginning of the night. But reviving about break of day, and ſitting up ſuddenly, the weeping Watchers fled away for fear, his Wife only, whom love had fixed, (though trembling and quaking) ſtay'd behind. Whom he comforting, ſaid,* Fear not, for I am truly riſen from Death, and permitted to live again among Mortals: But from henceforth in a far other manner then I have been accuſtomed. *And preſently riſing, went to the Chapel of the Village, and continuing in Prayer 'till day, then divided his Eſtate into three Portions; one for his Wife, another for his Children, and the third, which he reſerved for himſelf, he without delay diſtributed to the Poor, that he might have Treaſure in Heaven. And not*

*long after, being now freed from the cares of the World, he came to the Monaſtery of* Mailros, *which is almoſt ſurrounded with the River* Tweed. *And taking the Tonſure, liv'd in a private Cell which the Abbot had provided, and there continued to the day of his death in ſuch Contrition and Auſterity, that though his Tongue were ſilent, his Life did ſpeak what wonders he had ſeen above others. Now the Viſion was this.*

*My guide,* ſaid he, *had a ſhining countenance and bright apparel, we walk'd in ſilence, and (as I thought) towards the Solſtitial riſing of the Sun. At laſt we came into a Valley of vaſt breadth and deepneſs, but of infinite length, which being ſcituate on our left hand, did preſent unto us one ſide very terrible with enraged flames, the other not leſs intolerable with ſtorms of Snow and Hail overturning all things. Both were filled with Souls of men, which ſeem'd now and again to be toſs'd hither and thither as with the horrible violence of an impetuous tempeſt. For not being able to endure*

*thereby know us to be truly ſent of God.* Whereupon a great company of Diſeaſed perſons taſting of the ſaid Bread, forthwith recover'd, Praying God for ſuch ſingular manifeſtations of his Truth and Goodneſs. And the Fame thereof ſpread round about.

Now what more expreſs Teſtimony by Deeds can be given from Heaven for *Prayer for the Dead*, and *Maſſes for them*, *Invocation of Saints*, *Conſecration of Chriſme*, &c. which were then oppoſed by thoſe *Hereticks*, and now denyed by the *Proteſtants*, their Succeſſors in falſe Doctrine, againſt the conviction of Miracles from Heaven.

And now I have done with this *Motive*, only give me leave to ſay, that if *Proteſtants* could produce the like Miracles to atteſt their Faith and practice, they would make the World ring with the noiſe of them in every place, and crying Victory, ſet up their triumphant Banners with this, or ſome ſuch like Inſcription or Motto, *God with us againſt the*

*the* Roman *Church.* And then add ſome ſuch Invective as this in their Popular Sermons, *See what hard-hearted Wretches the* Papiſts *are, who wholly given over to a reprobate ſenſe, will not acknowledge our Doctrines to be glorious and revealed Truths of Jeſus Chriſt, which he hath witneſſed for ſuch to the whole World by the thundring voice of Divine Miracles.*

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*The*

# *The fifth Motive.*

That the eminent Sanctity taught and practis'd in the *Roman Catholick* Church, not to be found in any *Heretical* Communions divided from her, is a manifeſt mark that ſhe only is the true Church of Chriſt.

## SECT. I.

### *An Introduction.*

FRom works of Wonder, we paſs to works of Piety, to point out to us the true Church of God; which, though leſs admired, yet are far more precious, as being that Divine Seed, the Fruit whereof is eternal Glory. For we Spiritual Travellers,

vellers, cannot come to reſt our ſelves in the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, but by walking perſeverantly in the path of Holineſs.

Now, this Holineſs is not to be had but in the true Church, whoſe attribute is not only *Catholick*, but alſo *Holy*, as we profeſs in the Creed, and diſtinguiſhable by it in the Effects from all different Communions whatſoever; who, though they may cloak their deformity with Angelical appearances, yet in reality are Synagogues of Satan, having a form of Godlineſs, and denying the power thereof. And the truth is, though by ſad experience I found that the *Proteſtant Church*, (eſpecially that part of it which I judg'd more pure in Doctrine,) could not lay claim to much Sanctity, ſtill crying down the *Puritans* for meer Hypocrites, whoſe zeal in their way did ſhine far brighter to dazle vulgar eyes, yet ſuch prejudice I had conceiv'd againſt the Church of *Rome* by my education in a contrary Religion, that I thought her really Antichriſtian,

an, and Holineſs to have no more agreement with Her, then light with darkneſs, or Chriſt with Belial. So that after the Divine Goodneſs, by ſtrowing Thorns in my indirect ways, had made me ſenſible what a bitter thing it is to forſake Him, the Fountain of living Waters, for broken Ciſterns; and had put me upon a ſerious Inquiſition to find out Truth and Holineſs, to follow Them: it was no leſs wonder then ſatisfaction to me, to meet with ſuch heavenly Doctrine, and ſuch holineſs of Life in the *Roman Catholick* Church, and no other Communion divided from Her: And I plainly diſcover'd, that *Proteſtant* Leaders could not detain their followers in *Schiſm* and *Hereſie*, but by keeping them in ignorance of the right Faith and Worſhip of the *Roman* Church, and laying to her charge ſuch Doctrines and Practices which are not juſtly imputable unto Her. Yet this *Motive* was ſet more home to my heart, when my eyes were made happy ſpectators of ſome of that innumerable Company

of her Members, who in the continual exerciſe of moſt ſublime Spirituality, live more like Angels then men, though in mortal Bodies. But moſt of all, when our Lord was pleaſed ſo to ſhine upon me with the extraordinary light of his countenance, as to bleſs my weak endeavours, in following (though afar off) thoſe *Stars of the firſt Magnitude*, beautifying his Heaven on Earth in their glorious courſes. And truly I have from hence ſuch a ſtrong perſuaſion of Truth to be in the Church of *Rome*, wrought in my Soul, that, was there no other *Motive* to confirm me in the *Catholick Religion*, my heart very much deceives me, if I ſhould not upon this ſcore rather forgo my life, then forſake my preſent Faith to become a *Proteſtant*. Thus, by the grace of God, this wrought on me; and that it may work on others, I thus proceed.

SECT.

## SECT. II.

### *A further Declaration of the* Sanctity *taught and practis'd in the* Roman *Church.*

OUr *Creed* assures us, that Holiness is a badge of the true Church, that being one Article of the twelve, *I believe the Holy* Catholick *Church.* The *Psalmist* tells us, *That Holiness Beautifies the House of God for ever.* We learn from our Blessed Saviour, *That a tree is known by its fruit; and therefore as a good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit; so a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit.* The great Apostle of the *Gentiles* informs us, *That Christ gave himself for his Church, cleansing her by the laver of Baptism in his word, that he might present her to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, but that she might be holy and unspotted.* And beside Precepts, the Evan-

Ps. 93.

Mat. 7. 16, 17, 18.

Eph 5. 26, 27.

gelical Law doth councel us to walk in a way of ſublime perfection, by following Chriſt our Maſter with no ordinary Croſs on our ſhoulders; which *Proteſtants* think inſupportable, yea impoſſible, and 'tis ſo indeed to fleſh and blood. But he who invites us to it, hath born the burden of it himſelf, that it might become not only tolerable, but eaſie and delightful to willing Souls. Elſe we had never heard from his Sacred Lips. *Qui poteſt capere, capiat, He that can receive it, let him receive it.* After he had told us of thoſe who make themſelves *Eunuchs* for the Kingdom of Heaven. And afterwards, *If thou wilt be perfect, go and ſell all that thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in Heaven, and come and follow me.* And to make this Heavenly Counſel more operative, aſſures us, *That whoſoever forſakes Houſe, or Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for his Name ſake, ſhall receive a hundred fold, and alſo inherit everlaſting life.*

Mat. 19. 12.

ver. 21.

ver. 29.

Now

Now the rayes of this ſublime Holineſs do not only ſhine forth gloriouſly in the Lives of *Catholicks*; among whom multitudes of Souls enflamed with the fire of Divine Love, by forſaking whatſoever is near and dear to fleſh and blood, by a generous and wonderful contempt of the World, the Honours, Riches, and Glory of it, by Crucifying even the Lawful Pleaſures of the Fleſh, by a perfect abnegation of their Wills in exact obedience to Spiritual Directors, by wholly devoting themſelves to a Life of Spirituality, in the continual exerciſes of Prayer and Mortification, *Do perfect Holineſs in the fear of God.* Theſe are thoſe Angels on earth who make themſelves *Eunuchs* for the Kingdom of Heaven; who breathing after perfection, and panting after Glory, make God their only Treaſure; who with *Mary*, chuſing the better part which ſhall never be taken from them, do forſake all things whatſoever to follow Chriſt. Theſe are thoſe Virgin-Souls, *Who cleanſing* 2Cor.7.1.

*themſelves from all defilements of Fleſh and Spirit*; or as St. *Paul* elſewhere Phraſes it, *Sollicitous to be holy in Body and Spirit*, are altogether buſied about the things of our Lord, how they may pleaſe him. Who ſpend their lives in voluntary Afflictions, in wonderful Auſterities, in much Patience, in admired Chaſtity, in Love unfeigned, in profound Humility, in Watchings and Faſtings, in Solitude and Silence, in Prayer and Contemplation, in abſtraction from Temporal Affairs, that no ordinary pollutions of ſin contracted by converſing with the World may ſully the purity of their hearts, which only makes them precious in the Eyes of their Spiritual Bridegroom, and in a moſt inexpreſſible manner united to him. And indeed by theſe means vigorouſly proſecuted with perſeverance, they at length arrive to ſuch a tranſcendency and forgetfulneſs of all created things, to ſuch a contempt and annihilation of themſelves, to ſuch a Heavenly-mindedneſs and attention

1 Cor. 7. 32, &c.

tion to God only, to ſuch glorious manifeſtations of him, to ſuch a guſtful knowledge of his infinite perfections, to ſuch an experimental apprehenſion of the Divine preſence within them, to ſuch an unſpeakable fruition and repoſe in him with the full extent of their wills, that in a manner they become deify'd, and enjoy as much of Heaven as Souls are capable of in mortal Bodies. Which moſt intime union and communion with God, ſo ſublime and raviſhing, none either are, nor can be partakers of, who walk not in the uſe of the ſame means, whereby it only is attainable.

For purity of heart is a neceſſary and the immediate diſpoſition to divine union, and according to the degrees of Holineſs in the Soul, this glorious union is more or leſs participated. Now the nature of Sanctity conſiſting in a ſeparation, as well of perſons as things and places from profane and common uſes, with a ſpecial reference to God; or as ſome explain it, importing principally two

Firſt, Purity in being waſh'd from the filth of ſin, and drain'd from the polluting commixture of terene dregs; (which the *Greeks* had an eye to in expreſſing a Saint by the word ἀγιος, that is, *one without Earth.*) Secondly, Firmneſs and Stability in the wayes of God; it neceſſarily follows, that thoſe Happy Souls more eſpecially attain to this tranſcendent union with God, who become perfect *Nazarites* in ſeparating themſelves from the World and the things of it, that they may the better love, and pleaſe, and ſerve God with all their Heart, with all their Mind, and with all their Strength: And to confirm their Wills in theſe endeavours after the perfecting of Holineſs, do by Religious vows offer themſelves to God, that he may be wholly theirs, and they wholly his for Time, and for Eternity.

Now I appeal to *Proteſtants* themſelves, whether theſe means of Sanctity are to be found among them, who not only practice not, but deride and Scoff at this ſublime way

way to perfection in the Church of *Rome*, making themſelves merry with our Devotions. But as Wiſdom, ſo Holineſs is manifeſted by effects in her Children. And there needs no more to teſtify who is their Father.

And if any doubt whether ſuch earneſt endeavours after Holineſs, and this ſublime way of walking with God, by having *our Converſation in a manner continually in Heaven* while we are on earth be the conſtant Doctrine of the *Roman* Church, if they will be pleaſed to conſult *Catholick* Authors, they may receive abundant ſatisfaction from that incomparable Book of the imitation of Chriſt, the Heavenly Writings of St. *Francis de Sales* Biſhop of *Geneva*, the excellent Works of *Ludovicus Granatenſis*, ſo famous for practical Divinity, that ſublime Piece of *Spirituality the Scale of Perfection*; and to name no more, *Sancta Sophia*; for Books of this nature are infinite.

And

And if they desire to see the best *Commentaries* of such Heavenly Doctrines; in those happy Countries where *Catholick* Religion is publickly profess'd, they may (waving the failures of some, who like as in the Colledge of the Apostles, such is humane weakness, deviate from what they are taught, and what they profess,) be eye-witnesses of the Angelical Lives of thousands of Holy persons, to their admiration, and confusion also, if they will not be moved to repentance by such examples. And methinks, the most understanding *Protestatents*, who acknowledge for glorious Saints many who live and die in the *Roman* Arms, when a *Protestant* Saint was never heard of, and notwithstanding will not tread in their Holy Steps, do sufficiently condemn their own practice, and in effect say, *We know the way to Heaven, but will not take it.*

SECT.

## SECT. III.

### *A further profecution of this* Motive *from the new Doctrines and profane Practices of* Heretical *Communions.*

NO man can be ignorant that the Religion of *Proteſtants* doth diſclaim againſt the practice of this ſuper-eminent Sanctity, and condemns it in *Catholicks* as meer Superſtition and Will-worſhip. Forgetting, or not regarding that 'twas firſt councel'd by our Bleſſed Saviour, Preach'd unto the World by his Apoſtles, and practis'd in all Ages of the Church. Indeed for *Proteſtants* to have commended it, and yet not to follow it; was too groſs an abſurdity to gull the World withall, and would have given too palpable a lye to the godly name of Reformation. They were reſolv'd therefore to enlarge the narrow way

to

to Heaven, thus ſtraitned for more ſecurity in a buſineſs of higheſt concern, by aboliſhing the glory of Chriſtianity under the pretence of Chriſtian liberty: And they eaſily perſwaded themſelves that a ſenſe-pleaſing Religion back'd by the Secular Power, (as it was in *England* by King *Henry* in its firſt Introduction,) and advanced by Temporal Intereſt in impoveriſhing the Church to enrich greedy Courtiers, would over-ballance in Carnal minds the ſtrict Auſterities of *Catholick* Purity; Or, to make the beſt conſtruction of this ſtrange piece of *Reformation* on the Clergy's part, who had a hand in the buſineſs, when they ſaw nothing would quench the Avarice of the ſenſual King, but the Revenues devoted for ever to the maintenance of extraordinary Devotion, they thought it policy not to withſtand his will, but to flatter him by palliating the matter with ſpecious colours. Eſpecially when they conſidered that the Rich Biſhopricks, and Cathedral Preferments might be

the

the better preſerved, when this *auri ſacra fames* in the Great ones who were ſharers with his Majeſty in theſe Spoils of the Church, could not but be appeaſed by engroſſing to themſelves ſo many Rich and Sumptuous Monaſteries and Religious Houſes, the Glory and Envy of our Nation. For I am perſwaded the Clergy in this change were not all well pleaſed in this particular. And I remember a remarkable ſaying of Doctor *Jackſon*, a *Proteſtant* of no mean note, ſadly complaining in theſe words, or to this effect, *If three perſons in the Sacred Trinity had been as great an eye-ſoar to us as three Monaſteries in every Shire, we ſhould have been as well reformed* Atheiſts, *as reformed* Chriſtians.

But whatever were the Motives of ſeveral Intereſts in erecting a Religion founded on State-policy, this is moſt certain, that the Subſtantial practice of eminent Sanctity was baniſh'd out of *England* at the ſame time with the *Catholick* Faith.

Nei-

Neither was the birth of the *Proteſtant* Church in *England* the death only of ſuper-eminent Holineſs, but its malevolent influence did cool the fire of true Devotion in all ſorts of Chriſtians who gave it any entertainment. For no ſooner had this tree of Reformation took rooting in our Land, but it ſpread it ſelf into arms and boughs on every ſide, plentifully yielding the bitter Fruits of Diſſoluteneſs, Uncharitableneſs, Oppreſſion, Envyings, Back-bitings, Strifes, Ignorance of neceſſary Truths, Curioſity in knowledge, vain and frothy diſputes, ſtaggrings in Faith, Spiritual Pride, contempt of Eccleſiaſtical Authority. Irreligion, Profaneneſs, Sacriledge, Abuſe of Holy things, caſting off the Sacraments, Blaſphemies, Atheiſm; and in ſhort, whatſoever is contrary to true Godlineſs, and Evangelical Precepts of Jeſus Chriſt. So bad a tree could not bring forth better Fruits whereſoever once it took ſure rooting, ſo notorious and viſible to the World, that the Arch-reformers themſelves could

could not but confeſs it, and to their ſhame and conviction have left it upon record to Poſterity.

'Tis fit *Luther* the firſt Founder of this new Faith ſhould have the precedency in delivering his Verdict. Give him Audience while he tells us, that, *Mundus ex hac Doctrina*, &c. *The World by this Doctrine daily becomes worſe. Now ſeven devils are entred into every one, who formerly were only poſſeſs'd with one. Whole troops of Devils now get into mens hearts, that in this ſo glorious light of the Goſpel they are more covetous, more crafty, more unjuſt, more inhumane, more ſtubborn then formerly they were in* Popery. And obſerve it, that he confeſſes thoſe evils did proceed from his new Doctrine, not occaſionally, but as the natural fruit of it. And if ever he ſpoke Truth after his *Apoſtacy*, here we have't. For they that conſider what an innundation of evils broke in upon a great part of the Chriſtian World, upon his breaking from the *Catholick* Church, and Preach-

*Conc. 2. Dan. 1. Adventus.*

Preaching a new Gospel first in *Germany*, may very well think that now was the time come, *For unchaining Satan, and Hell was broke loose to torment us mortals here on earth.*

Apoc. 20. 1, 2.

Witness *Calvin*, *In exiguo illorum numero*, &c. *Amongst the small number of them who have forsaken* Popish Idolatry, *the greatest part of them are full of Perfidiousness and Treacheries. They outwardly profess a notable Zeal, but if examined inwardly, you will find them abounding in deceits.* Neither indeed could a false Faith bring forth any other but a counterfeit Holiness. For these are those Hypocrites whom our Blessed Saviour speaks of, *That are ravenous Wolves in Sheaps-cloathing; that cleanse the outside of the cup and platter, leaving the inside full of rapine and uncleanness.* Or, *Like whited Sepulchers, which appear beautiful to men, but within are stuff'd with dead mens bones, and putrefaction.* These are those Reprobates concerning the Faith fore-told by the Apostle, *Having a form of godliness, denying the*

Int. 11. Dani. v. 34

Mat. 7.

Mat. 23. 25.

ver. 27.

2 Tim. 3 5, &c.

*Power*

*Power thereof.* Thoſe Saints of the higheſt elevation in their own conceits, whom St. *Jude* calls, *Clouds without water*, darkening only the ſplendor of the Goſpel, not making it fruitful in good works by any refreſhing influences of real Piety: Which the ſame *Calvin* diſcern'd ſo clearly through theſe clouds, that he confeſſes, *Vix eorum decimus*, &c. *Hardly the tythe of thoſe who gave their name to the Goſpel, (that is, who left the Church of* Rome *to be of their Religion) did it for any other end then to wallow in wantonneſs more freely without reſtraint.* *ver.* 12. *Comm. in 2. Pet. 2. 1.*

*Andreas Muſculus* affords us likewiſe as ample a teſtimony, extracted from him by evidence, of Truth againſt his will. *Quod ſi veritatem*, &c. *If we will confeſs the Truth, we cannot but teſtify this concerning us* Goſpellers, *that no men in the whole World are more given to Whoredoms, Uſury, Circumventions and Deceits, then our ſelves.* *L. de nov. iuſt. die.*

Biſhop *Andrews*, perhaps the greateſt Scholar that ever *England*

bred of *Schiſmatick*, and in whom was ſome reliſh of *Catholick* Piety, in his Sermon upon, *Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, hath words to this effect, *We have taken away Auricular Confeſſion, and inſtead thereof brought in Auricular Profeſſion. Our Religion is good at In and In, we are all for hearing Sermons, for taking in, but we bring forth nothing, no fruits I am ſure worthy of repentance.* And in his Sermon upon, *Cum jejunatis*, &c. *When ye faſt, be not as the Hypocrites*, &c. he ſpeaks after this manner, *The* Romaniſts *will needs have us to be thoſe locuſts St.* John *ſaw coming out of the bottomleſs pit to plague the earth. Now the locuſts are devouring Creatures, all belly; and truely while we are ſuch enemies to religious faſting, I know not how to anſwer their accuſation.* So that the words made uſe of by our Bleſſed Saviour againſt the wicked Servant in the Parable (*Luke* the 19, 22.) *Ex ore tuo te judico, Out of thy own mouth I will judge thee*, may fitly be applyed to the *Proteſtant* Church ac-

Mat. 3. 8.

Mat. 6. 16.

Apoc. 9. 2.

accuſed to be falſe at the bar of Juſtice, *Ex ore tuorum judicaberis*, What need we further proof or witneſs, when thy deareſt Sons and greateſt Patrons do give in evidence for thy condemnation?

Neither could it poſſibly be otherwiſe, where ever their new Faith took poſſeſſion. For the affections of the will, which are the feet of the Soul, walking after the light of the underſtanding, the eye thereof, their practice of neceſſity muſt be anſwerable to their Doctrines: The firſt wheel of a Clock gives motion to all the reſt. The effect cannot but follow the nature of its cauſe. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles? Can a poiſonous fountain ſend forth wholeſome ſtreams?* When the *Proteſtant* Reform condemns it for Superſtition to forſake all ſenſual contentments to follow Chriſt, and account it abominable Will-worſhip to live in perpetual Virginity, that we may in a holy vacancy from all earthly encumbrances, mind only the things

S Mat. 7. 16 S. James 3. 11.

of God: could it be, but the Love of the World, Luxury, and Carnality would take deeper rooting in the hearts of men ſo poiſoned, and bring forth fruit of that nature more abundantly, while manur'd with ſuch Dung-hill Doctrines? When they with much vehemency preach down *Merit of good works* (which they condemn, becauſe either they do not, or will not underſtand in what ſenſe the Church holds it) as derogatory to Chriſts ſufferings; was it poſſible but a general decay of Piety ſhould follow among them, and good works in a maner be confin'd among *Catholicks*, who believe that a cup of cold water given to the meaneſt of the houſhold of Faith for Chriſts ſake, ſhall not looſe its reward; and a Crown of Juſtice ſhall be rendred by the juſt Judge to all who fight the good fight of Faith with perſeverance? And well had it been for poor *England*, if the current of the *Proteſtant* Goſpel had ſtopt in the omiſſion only of good works, for then the ſtreams which make glad

Mat. 10. 41, 42.

2Tim.4.7.

glad the City of our God, might more eaſily have return'd into their wonted channel; but their ſelf-intereſted Religion hath ſwallowed plentifully what the Piety of *Catholick* Ages had devoted to the perpetual Service of the moſt high God.

When they ſo labour to diſgrace Church-Tradition, and bring it in contempt, that in the Interpretation of Sacred Scripture private reaſon may be admitted for the Judge of Faith; do they not inevitably open a paſſage to an everlaſting deluge of *Hereſie* and *Schiſm* in the Church? Can this be denyed after the miſeries of ſo much experience? In vertue of ſuch a Principle, muſt not men neceſſarily *become lovers of themſelves, high-minded, proud, blaſphemous, diſobedient to Spiritual Superiors, reſiſting the Truth, reprobate concerning the Faith, ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the Truth?* 2 Tim. 3. 1, &c. The very *Hereticks* St. *Paul* forewarns us of, that we may ſhun them. For ſays he, *From ſuch turn away.* I would not here willingly be too tedious.

Only good *Reader*, give me leave to tell thee, that there are other deadly fruits naturally ſpringing from this fatal tree of *Reformation*; as diſobedience to Magiſtrates, Tumults, Seditions, Rebellions, Bloodſhed, Murders, Aſſaſſinations, Rapins, over-turnings of Kingdoms, changings of Governments, and all thoſe miſeries which accompany the worſt of evils, a Civil War; (the dregs of which cup of Gods diſpleaſure our poor Iſland hath ſo deeply drank of, that reeling and ſtaggering up and down ſhe knew not where to ſtand or fix, 'till at length ſhe happily pitch'd upon her true and right *Baſis* for Temporal Power, *Charles* the II. our Dread Soveraign) all neceſſarily flowing from Principles of the *Proteſtant* Religion. A certain Argument that it cannot come from God, who is the God of Order, and not of Confuſion. For their new Faith being brought into the World and propagated by diſobedience to the Church of *Rome*, and caſting off her Eccleſiaſtical

ſiaſtical Authority: when they had thus ſhrunk up the ſinews, or rather quite broke in pieces the reins of ſpiritual Government eſtabliſh'd by Jeſus Chriſt to continue for ever, it was not poſſible the ſecular Magiſtrate could long ſtand firm though, guarded with the Sword: But if he would not ſuffer his ſubjects, ſo minded, to do what ever ſeems good in their own eyes, and caſt Religion into a mould they fancy moſt agreeable to Scripture, and the purity of the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, they would (this gap once made in the hedge of Government,) gather head, and when ever they found it feaſible take up arms againſt him as a deſtroyer of Chriſtian Liberty, a violator of their Conſciences, an Antichriſtian and Bloody Tyrant, a Perſecutor of Gods Saints; and if they thrive in the attempt, take all Power into their own hands, and make themſelves Lords and Maſters as well of their Soveraign as of their Brethren. For it could not be rationally thought that men would

long ſuffer a Religion to be impos'd upon them by a Secular Prince and his Councellors, who themſelves had contradicted in points of Faith the Authority of the Church, and conſent and practice of the whole Chriſtian World: And whether the tranſactions and ſtrange revolutions in our Native Country, during the Civil War and ſubſequent uſurpation, do not make this Truth a Hiſtory, let the World judge. And that the ſame hath been attempted, or really effected, in what ever places the *Proteſtant* zeal took any conſiderable footing, the Chronicles of other Nations are ſad Witneſſes.

Thus falſe Prophets, and falſe Doctrines, whatever the pretences be, may be known by their Fruits; the γενεσις, or mark our Bleſſed Saviour refers us to in ſuch Caſes. From all which it appears, *That the general Piety and ſingular Sanctity taught and practis'd in the Church of* Rome, *proceeds from the Author of all Holineſs; and that their tree of Reformation could never take rooting*

Mat. 7. 16, 17.

or

*or influence from Heaven, which brings forth ſuch evil fruits upon the earth.*

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## *The Concluſion.*

AND now 'tis high time to indulge my Pen, which I little thought, when firſt ſet to Paper, would have laboured ſo long in this employment: However, I ſhall not repent of my pains, though ſo much exceeding the limits of my intentions in the Eſſay, if any poor wandring Soul receive hereby the leaſt light to guide her towards the Manſions of Bleſſed Eternity, and ſo prove inſtrumental for her Salvation. This is my aim and hopes alſo; and yet though they ſhould become wholly unſucceſsful, I ſhall reſt ſatisfied, in that I have uſed the beſt of my endeavours towards my Countries good, in matters of the higheſt importance; and eſpecially the Spiritual profit of my dear *Proteſtant* Friends

Friends and Relations, whom the more I love ſince this happy change wrought in me, the leſs perhaps am I beloved of them. Amongſt whom, ſome I know for certain, who have ſo alienated their hearts meerly for Religions ſake, as to return me hatred for my good will. But I do, and ſhall, betake my ſelf unto Prayer for ſuch Objects of pity and compaſſion, with a hopeful perſwaſion that they will be Converted as well as more moderate tempers, ſeeing all things are alike equal to an Omnipotent goodneſs; and experience tells us, that the moſt violent *Proteſtants* have ſometimes become the moſt zealous *Catholicks*, *By the*
Phil. 3. 21 *mighty working of him who is able to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.*

'Tis true, the Caſe with *Catholicks* in *England* is ſad, by reaſon of thoſe oppreſſive Laws which are in force againſt them: and doubtleſs is the cauſe why ſome forſake us for the love of the World, and do not actually unite themſelves to the true Church. In a word, Temporal Advantages,

vantages, Worldly Intereſts and Proſterity ſtanding on the *Proteſtants* ſide, Perſecution and preſent Sufferings on ours; renders the Converſion, or at leaſt the Profeſſion of the Faith to many ineffectual. Let one be convinc'd, and he replyes, *What ſhall I do with my Wife and Children? Would you have me ruine my Eſtate and Fortune?* O miſerable *England!* where Truth is oppreſſed. And O unhappy thoſe who yeild ſo cowardly in the time of Tryal and Temptation! Had the primitive Chriſtians been thus minded, the *Catholick* Faith long ſince had been buried in oblivion, and ſuch glorious Saints as Martyrs had never been known.

What is Time to Eternity? What are Friends and Relations, to the everlaſting Society of Saints and Angels? What are Worldly Advantages, to Heavenly Riches? Shall we not endure a momentary Croſs, for an Eternal Crown? Is it not the high commendation of *Moſes* the Faithful Servant of God, *That he choſe*

Heb. 11. 25. *choſe rather Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon?* Know we not, *That he who loveth Father, or Mother, or Son, or Daughter, better than Chriſt, is not worthy of him?* Alas! *What will it profit a man, to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* Certainly whoever lays this ſadly to heart, cannot but cry out with that devout Saint, *Deus meus, & omnia. Malem Crucem cum Chriſto, quam Coronam cum mundo. Whatſoever I loſe, I'll not not part with my Saviour; he's all in all. I had rather have him with a Croſs, than a Crown without him.*

Mat. 10. 37.

Mat. 16. 26.

This is indeed an Heroick reſolution becoming a Chriſtian, and anſwerable to the nobleneſs of our Religion, which appears in nothing more then the contempt of this World; and this reſolution is agreeable to the Purity of our Holy Faith: This is the Promiſe we ſolemnly made to God at our Baptiſm

tiſm in the preſence of the Church Militant and Triumphant, why will we become Renegadoes from our Colours? Why will we not couragiouſly fight the good fight of Faith, under the glorious Standard of Chriſt, againſt all the enemies of our Salvation? Whatſoever we part withall for God's ſake, we ſhall not be looſers by it. He will ſuperabundantly reward us, who hath promiſed, *That whoſoever leaveth Houſes, Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for his Names ſake, ſhall receive a hundred fold here, and hereafter inherit everlaſting Life.* Believe me, dear Country men, 'tis very true; I know the firſt by happy experience, *If ſpiritual riches,* (as St. *Hierom* expounds it) *and comforts paſs for payment; and wait for the latter in Gods good time.*

Mat. 19. 29.

L. 3. in Mat. ca. 19.

But, alas! things Spirital are little operative, 'till we have a guſt and feeling of them, which cannot be without ſome progreſs in Spirituality; and things eternal are further off

off, and ſeldom apprehended with fixed thoughts, while Worldly contents and advantages being preſent and viſible, work ſtrongly on us, to win and fetter our affections to them. And therefore many of us living more by ſenſe, then faith or reaſon, are willing *to poſſeſs our Souls with patience in ſufferings for Chriſt, and expectation of that far more exceeding weight of glory which they work for us.* We think it intolerable to part with any Temporal Poſſeſſions for an Heavenly Inheritance; And ſo procraſtinating our reception into the *Catholick* Church from time to time, refer all to Gods Mercy and a Death-bed repentance. A ſad caſe this, yet too common among us.

A caſe, wherein I might have periſh'd eternally, had not the infinite goodneſs and extraordinary favour of God vouchſafed unto me with patience and long ſufferance, at laſt looſed my bonds and fetters, and brought me into the boſom of his *Catholick* Church, ſetting my feet at liberty

liberty to walk in the path of Holineſs to ever-bleſſed Eternity. *The ſnare is broken, and my Soul is delivered.* Pſal. 113. *And bleſſed be the God of my Salvation.* Pſal. 107. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe.* Pſal. 115. *I will now pay my vows in the preſence of his Saints, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will offer to God the ſacrifice of Thankſgiving, and praiſe his Name while I have my Beeing. All creatures in Heaven and Earth bleſs God for me, and bleſs God with me.* Pſal. 102. Praiſe thou the Lord, O my Soul. *Amen, Amen.*

*Soli Deo Gloria.*

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